AGRI-NEWS

September 7, 1987

For immediate release

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AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

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September 7, 1987
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Farming for the Future administrative body renamed

Alberta Agriculture Minister Peter Elzinga has announced two key changes to the Agricultural Research Council of Alberta. The council is the body which has been the official administrator of the Farming for the Future agricultural research program from the program's inception in 1978.

The first change is a new name. Effective immediately, the council has been renamed the Farming for the Future Council.

Mr. Elzinga says, "With the creation of the Agricultural Research Institute earlier this year, we felt the name of the Agricultural Research Council had to be changed. As a result, we have selected a name, the 'Farming for the Future Council', which is quite specific and appropriate."

The second change announced by the Minister is a new chairman for the Farming for the Future Council. Mr. Elzinga has decided to step down from the post, and has named Alberta Agriculture's Deputy Minister H.B. (Ben) McEwen to succeed him.

Apart from these changes, the Minister noted the Farming for the Future Council will operate in exactly the same fashion as the former council. There have been no changes in goals or objectives, and emphasis will continue to be placed on fostering short-term research, the area in which Farming for the Future concentrates its awards.

In comparison, the mandate of the new Alberta Agricultural Research Institute is somewhat broader. While it is expected to take an interest in all agricultural research, the Institute is specifically intended to address concerns in the area of long-term research and to foster greater participation by private industry in the whole agricultural research sector.

-30-

Contact: Dr. Y. Teklemariam
Research Coordinator
Research Division
Alberta Agriculture
Edmonton
(403) 427-1956

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September 7, 1987
For immediate release

Education material with agricultural theme released

Although three per cent of Alberta elementary students are considered farm kids, the message of agriculture is being made available to the masses through new educational material.

A teacher's handbook promoting awareness of the agriculture industry at the Grade 1 to 3 level has just been released by Alberta Agriculture.

Available to Alberta elementary schools, the handbook weaves an agricultural theme into activities and projects, which promote language arts skill development, says the handbook editor.

Betty Gabert says the "Agriculture and Me" handbook, prepared in three parts for each of the three early grades, is now available on a first-come first-served basis to rural and urban schools.

Gabert is also offering to conduct hour-long regional training workshops for teachers interested in using the material. A minimum of 10 teachers are needed for each workshop.

The handbooks contain fully-developed, activity-based lesson plans, supporting teacher resources and student worksheets. The multidisciplinary handbook includes concepts from social studies, science and math.

The new handbook is part of the department's Ag in the Classroom Program. Co-ordinated by Gabert, the program was created in 1985 to promote awareness of agriculture by developing educational material, with an agricultural theme, for Alberta schools.

The "Agriculture and Me" handbook is the second phase of the program. Last year a "Pride in Alberta" course for Grades 4, 5 and 6 was introduced to schools.

Developed by professional educators, the material is prepared in consideration of the provincial curriculum. It is tried in a one-year pilot project, evaluated and revised as needed.

"We received very positive response from the Pride in Alberta handbook," says Gabert. "It is now being revised. We are anxious for teachers to obtain a copy of the Agriculture and Me handbook and provide us with an evaluation of that material."

(Cont'd)

The Grade 1 to 3 handbook takes a basic look at agriculture using different activities to introduce animals and crops, farm lifestyle and the concept of food supply to junior grades.

Content material for the Ag in the Classroom handbooks features all areas of the agriculture industry including production, processing and marketing. It also offers some suggestion of agriculture careers.

"The tone of this material is not to sell students on an agriculture career, but we feel it is important that children are aware of agriculture and learn the contribution it makes to their daily lives," says Gabert.

The Agriculture and Me handbook, considered state of the art material, was developed by Nadia Hochachka, a language arts specialist.

While supplies last, one free copy of the handbook is available to each elementary school in the province.

For more information or a copy of the handbook contact the Agriculture Education Branch, Second Floor, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6 or phone 427-2402.

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Contact: Betty Gabert
427-2402

September 7, 1987
For immediate release

Now is the time to maintain field ditches

Farmers working around wet spots in the field as they attempt harvesting this fall have a graphic reminder that it's time to maintain their field ditches, says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

Cultivation and field work drag soil into ditches each year reducing their effectiveness, says Neil MacAlpine, a farm water management engineer in Edmonton. Good performance of field ditches can be restored by regrading the ditch bottom with a farm scraper or level blade.

MacAlpine notes that by law and for the farmer's own protection, field ditches should be inspected and licenced under the Water Resources Act.

The specialist says "V" ditchers are not a good choice for ditch construction deeper than 20 centimetres (8 inches). Field ditches less than 80 centimetres (2.5 feet) deep should be built so they can be crossed by large farm equipment.

"A flat bottom (3 metres [10 feet] wide) and gently sloped ditch banks are essential so that a field ditch will not cut up a field or jolt equipment (and farmers' backs) to pieces," he says. "Ditch banks that come back 10 feet for every foot of depth are easily crossed by today's large equipment."

In a flat field where the field ditch is draining only a quarter section, replacing some topsoil through the ditch will permit cultivation and cropping of the ditch.

Field ditches must be grassed on steeper slopes or where large volumes of water are moving through the ditch. In the fall, seeding fall rye in the waterway with an underseeding of a mixture of bermuda grass, tall fescue, smooth brome grass and Kentucky bluegrass will provide immediate protection for next spring's runoff.

"Farmers with grassed waterways should check them in the fall for bare spots," says MacAlpine. "Again, fall rye and the recommended grass mixture should be seeded to provide immediate protection for bare areas."

(Cont'd)

Subsurface (tile) drainage systems should be checked at inlets (gravel or Jensen inlets) and outlet culverts to make sure debris is not blocking these critical areas.

"Grassed waterways and to some extent, field ditches, are land dedicated to the safe movement of water, not crop production," says the engineer. "Water erosion problems start when farmers ignore this reality and attempt to crop areas that have high velocities or high volumes of water flowing over them. Water erosion can begin on a very gentle slope and soon become a major problem."

MacAlpine says farmers planning to develop new ditches are reminded that the Water Resources Act requires that drainage be reviewed for a license to protect both himself and downstream landowners from problems.

"Ditches constructed without this review are illegal," he says. "Landowners with illegal ditches are open to enforcement under the Act and civil suits for damage."

For more information about on-farm water management contact the conservation and development branch of Alberta Agriculture, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

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Contact: Neil MacAlpine
422-4385

September 7, 1987
For immediate release

Alberta dairy plants capture awards

Alberta dairy plants captured several awards at the 1987 dairy products competition at the Pacific National Exhibition in Vancouver, August 22 to September 7.

In announcing the results, Ken Waldon, head of Alberta Agriculture's dairy processing branch, said that entries were received from across Canada. "Butter class entries came from Alberta, B.C., Saskatchewan, Quebec and New Brunswick. Cheese class entries came from Alberta, B.C. Quebec and Nova Scotia."

In the butter classes, Central Alberta Dairy Pool (CADP) in Red Deer, made a clean sweep with the first prize in the salted, one pound print and first in the unsalted, one pound print categories. CADP was also the recipient of the Special Award given to the exhibitor with the highest agggregate score in the two butter classes.

In the cheese classes, Crystal Springs Cheese Farm of Bluffton, received a first in the goat's milk cheese class for their entry of fresh cheese and placed third for their entry of aged cheese. Neapolis Dairy Products Ltd., Didsbury, was awarded second place in the variety cheese class-fresh, for an entry of Quark; third in the variety cheese class-semisoft, for an entry of Limburger; third in the cheddar cheese class-4.5 to 5.5 kg, for an entry of Jersey Milk Cheddar; and fourth in the variety cheese class-soft, for an entry of Camembert.

"These awards to Alberta plants reflect the the high quality of dairy products in this province," said Waldon. "When our plants can compete successfully with those in other provinces, we know they have done a fine job and deserve our congratulations."

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Contact: Ken Waldon
352-1220

September 7, 1987
For immediate release

Late fall soil sample gives best results

Fall soil sampling has become a common practice on many Alberta farms, but it's important to remember that it is better to sample later in the fall than early.

"Significant changes in the soil nitrogen level can occur during the fall period," says Len Kryzanowski, a soil specialist with Alberta Agriculture. "Therefore, it's recommended that sampling be done as close to freeze-up as possible to give the best indication of soil nutrient status and to predict fertilizer requirements for next year's crop.

"Nitrogen is an important and costly nutrient and its availability in the soil can vary greatly between years and seasons," he says.

Crop uptake of nitrogen is closely related to the quantity of nitrate-nitrogen (NO_3-N) in the soil at the time of seeding. Research in Alberta shows that the difference in available nitrogen between early fall and spring soil samples average about 30 pounds per acre, while the difference between late fall and spring is much less and provides a reliable indicator to estimate fertilizer requirements.

Fall soil nitrogen levels can provide a good estimate of spring soil nitrogen supply if samples are taken after the surface soil has cooled to about 5 C or less. Based on historical records, the surface soil (0-10 cm) should cool to 5 C or less by the first week of October for much of the province. In the southern region, this normally might not occur until mid-October. A farmer could use a thermometer to best determine when the soil is cool enough for sampling.

"Although samples taken close to freeze-up are most desirable, sampling should not be delayed too late to risk the possibility of not being able to take samples at all," says Kryzanowski.

Sampling during the winter should be avoided. Timing of sampling and soil temperature are not as critical for measuring other nutrients such as phosphorus, potassium, and sulphur or soil pH.

(Cont'd)

Late fall soil sample gives best results (cont'd)

Depth of sampling is a very important factor in measuring the available supply of nitrogen and sulphur. These nutrients are very soluble in water and can be easily leached from the surface soil. In addition, crop roots utilize nitrogen and sulphur to a depth of 60 cm (24 in) or more.

The top 15 cm (6 in) of soil represents about 25 per cent of the volume of soil utilized by a crop and may contain 30 to 65 per cent of the available nitrogen. The remaining 35 to 70 per cent of available nitrogen in the soil is below 15 cm. Fertilizer recommendations based on soils sampled to 60 cm (24 in) are more precise and reliable than those recommendations based on only surface soil samples.

For best results, samples should be taken for three separate depths: 0-15 cm (0-6 in), 15-30 cm (6-12 in) and 30-60 cm (12-24 in) using a soil sampling tube. Aproximately 15 to 20 places in each field should be sampled (subsamples) keeping the different depths separate. Once collected, the subsamples for each depth can be mixed together to produce a representative composite sample for each depth. These samples must be dried as soon as they are collected after which about 500 g (1 lb) should be sent to a reliable laboratory for analysis.

"Weather, previous crop yields, management and soil area can have a significant effect on soil nitrogen levels and its distribution in the soil," Kryzanowski says. "Regular soil sampling to account for these variations is recommended.

Ideally, each field should be sampled every year, he says, but this is not practical. A farmer should develop a soil sampling program which rotates the soil sampling process over the entire field every two years. Samples should be taken from all fields that have marked differences in management and crop history such as fallow versus cropped, manure application or legume plowdown. A soil testing program will provide a history of analysis and recommendations that are useful in farm management and crop planning.

(Cont'd)

Late fall soil sample gives best results (cont'd)

"Soil testing is a very important management tool," says Kryzanowski. "It can identify factors limiting crop yield and can form the foundation of a fertilizer program.

"Fertilizer can represent 50 per cent of the input costs of producing a crop and the fertilizer requirements can be adjusted markedly by the recommendations of a soil test report. These recommendations can help the farmer achieve a maximum return for his investment by preventing both over fertilization and under fertilization."

There are many private laboratories in Alberta, as well as the Alberta Agriculture Soils and Animal Nutrition Laboratory, that provide soil testing services and fertilizer recommendations for farmers. For further information on soil sampling or to obtain a soil sampling tool, contact an Alberta Agriculture district office or fertilizer supply company.

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Contact: Len Kryzanowski
436-9150

September 7, 1987
For immediate release

Deadline for farm fed claims approaches

Producers wanting to submit farm fed claims under the Alberta Feed Grain Market Adjustment Program should circle September 30 on their calendar.

"All claims must be received and signed, at an Alberta Agriculture district office, on or before this date," says Sheila Devereux, program agrologist.

The program allows a benefit of $21 per tonne on home-grown feed grain which was fed to livestock before June 30, 1987.

Producers should note that claims must be submitted on personalized claim forms. Also, final claims cannot be approved if claimants have not submitted 1986-87 registration updates and also returned all unused $21 "A" certificates.

The Alberta Feed Grain Market Adjust Program was replaced by the Alberta Crow Benefit Offset Program on July 1, 1987. "The objective of the new program--offsetting the Crow benefit which is paid to the railways--remains the same," says Devereux. "The level of benefit on feed grain fed to livestock after June 30, 1987 is $13 per tonne."

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Contact: Sheila Devereux
422-0015

September 7, 1987
For immediate release

Agri-News Briefs

CRAFTS FEATURED AT LAMBS IN LACOMBE

Grab your Christmas gift list and head to Lacombe September 19 for the second annual Lambs in Lacombe, sheep and wool exposition. An extensive craft sale of wool products and other handmade items will be part of the event held at the Agriculture Canada research farm. The day's events which get underway at 10 a.m., centre around a sale of performance tested commercial ewe lambs from across the province. There will also be a live breed display, showcasing rams and ewes from 10 different sheep breeds raised in Alberta. There will be sheep dog trials, a junior sheep show, a photo competition, an Angora goat display, a shearing demonstration, a sheep to shawl competition, a trade show and a lamb barbecue. Admission is $1. For more information contact Cathy Gallivan 427-5077.

FLAVORED EGGS POSSIBLE

The Canadian Egg Marketing Agency says if you store eggs in the fridge next to strong smelling food, you may end up with flavored eggs. The agency says although eggs look to be naturally sealed, an average shell has between 6,000 and 8,000 tiny holes. Strong smells such as salami can sneak into the egg through these holes and affect the flavor.

BROTHERS WIN 4-H TRIP TO ROYAL WINTER FAIR

Two brothers, both members of the Sangudo 4-H Beef Club have won a free trip to the Royal Winter Fair in Toronto. Brett and Jay Wildman, both 10-year 4-H beef club members won the trip as part of the first place prize in the Western Canadian Show Team Judging Competition at Bashaw. The brothers are getting used to winning sponsored trips. Jay, 21, won a trip to an international 4-H team judging competition at Agribition in Regina, last year and Brett, 19, won a two week 4-H sponsored trip to the Northwest Territories. The Wildmans represented the Alberta Angus Association in an all-breeds competition.

(Cont'd)

Agri-News Briefs (cont'd)

LCC INTRODUCES IRRIGATION TECHNOLOGY PROGRAM

Lethbridge Community College is offering a two year irrigation technology program this fall. The program will train graduates for careers in the irrigation and drainage industry in Western Canada. Potential employers include federal and provincial government agencies, irrigation dealers, irrigation districts, municipalities, golf courses, school boards and consultants. LCC has offered an irrigation option in the second year of its agricultural technology program, for several years. The new irrigation technology program is an expansion of that existing program to include more soil and water resource management, turf and agricultural irrigation design, drainage and computer courses. For further information on the course contact Len Ring, irrigation instructor at LCC, 3000 College Drive South, Lethbridge, Alberta, T1K 1L6.

ALBERTA LAND UNSETTLED

Alberta still has plenty of wide open spaces according to the annual report of the Alberta Forestry, Lands and Wildlife. The document shows the province has 661,185 square kilometres of land with about 54 per cent as provincial parks and forested land with no settlement. About 35 per cent is owned or controlled privately, about two per cent is designated Indian reserve or Metis settlement and about nine per cent is federally-owned parkland or national defence land. While most of the province has fairly firm footing, about 16,796 square kilometres or about 2.5 per cent of the province is covered in water.

USES 4-H SCHOLARSHIP AT U OF A

An ex-Mayerthorpe 4-H'er is preparing to invest her $1,000 scholarship in studies at the University of Alberta in Edmonton. Tracy Pfannmuller, 22, was recently awarded the 1987 Petro-Canada 4-H Youth Leadership Award for Alberta. Pfannmuller won the scholarship over 31 other applicants for an award winning essay on "citizenship. Earlier this year she earned an animal health technology diploma from Lakeland College at Vermilion and plans to major in a special education program at the U of A.

(Cont'd)

BEEF CONSUMPTION HOLDING STEADY

There is a lot of misinformation being distributed about the meat industry says Mary Wiley with the Canadian Meat Council in Toronto. Contrary to reports that beef consumption is dropping in favor of other products such as pork and poultry, the spokesman says the figures don't bear this out. Quoting figures from Statistics Canada, Wiley says Canadians in 1986 consumed about 38 kilograms of beef per year compared to about 36 kilograms per capita in 1966. Annual pork consumption per capita has increased from about 21 kilograms in 1966 to about 27 kilograms in 1986 and chicken consumption has gone from about nine kilograms per person in 1966 to about 19 kilograms per person in 1985. Veal and lamb consumption over the 20 year-period holds fairly steady at about three kilograms per person per year.

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Coming Agricultural Events

1987

Impact of Climate Change on the Canadian Prairies
Workshop/Symposium
Edmonton, Alberta.....September 9 - 11
Bonnie Magill - Edmonton - 422-2070

Lambs in Lacombe
Family sheep and wool fair
Lacombe, Alberta.....September 19
Cathy Gallivan - Edmonton - 427-5077

Alberta Feed Industry Conference
Convention Inn
Edmonton, Alberta.....September 23
Association office - Alberta division - 482-2030

American Society of Agriculture Engineers &
Canadian Society of Agriculture Engineering Conference
Lethbridge Lodge
Lethbridge, Alberta.....September 23 - 25
Dr. Wayne Lindwall - Dr. Theron Sommerfeldt - 327-4561 - Lethbridge

Western Nutrition Conference (livestock)
Convention Inn
Edmonton, Alberta.....September 24 - 25
Sam Jaikaran - Edmonton - 436-9150

Western Canada Fertilizer Association - Annual Convention
Fantasyland Hotel
Edmonton.....September 27 - 29
Ed Zenko - Edmonton - 426-3550

Poultry Serviceman's Workshop (12th Annual)
Lake Louise Inn
Lake Louise, Alberta.....September 28 - 30
Rod Chernos - Airdrie - 948-8533; Tom Sydness - Edmonton - 427-5090

Western Canadian Water Association
Annual Conference
Saskatoon.....October 20 - 23
Doreen Munsie - Calgary - 291-4882

National "Outstanding Young Farmers" Program
Rotary House, Calgary exhibition grounds
Calgary, Alberta.....October 20 - 24
Michael Guertin - Calgary - 285-6898

American Agriculture at the Crossroads
(Conservation Assessment of the U.S. Farm Bill)
Hyatt Regency Hotel
Kansas City, Missouri.....November 1 - 3
SCSA Head Office - Ankeny, Iowa, (515) 289-2331

(Cont'd)

Agriculture coming events (cont'd)

Agricultural Credit Conference
Inn on the Park
Toronto, Ontario.....November 1 - 4
Monique Greenwood - Toronto - (416) 362-6092 ext. 236

Northern Alberta Development Council Conference
Grande Prairie Inn
Grande Prairie.....November 4 - 6
Lynne Kemper - Edmonton - 422-4232

Society for Range Management Fall Seminar
Lethbridge, Alberta.....November 5 - 6
Dan McKinnon - Airdrie - 948-5447; Bob Wroe - Lacombe - 782-4641

Alberta Beekeepers Association Annual Convention
Fantasyland Hotel
Edmonton, Alberta.....November 9 - 14
Louise Zwaenepeol - Edmonton - 475-3314

Alternate Crops Conference
Lethbridge Lodge Hotel
Lethbridge, Alberta.....November 11 - 13
Blair Roth - Lethbridge - 381-5127; Thomas Krahn - Brooks - 362-3391

Agri-Trade IV
Westerner Park
Red Deer, Alberta.....November 12 -15
Red Deer - 347-4491

Alberta Horticultural Convention and Trade Show
Capri Centre
Red Deer.....November 12 - 14
David Gourlay - Millet, Alta. - 387-4285

Alberta Provincial Potato Conference
Lethbridge Lodge Hotel
Lethbridge, Alberta.....November 18 - 20
B.A. Butterwick - Calgary - 291-2430

Farm Woman's Day
Edson, Alberta.....November 19
Rhonda Reid - Edson - 723-8205

The Farm, The Family, The Future
Farm Women's Conference
Grande Prairie, Alberta.....November 19 - 20
Dorene Slater - Fort Vermilion - 927-3712

Alberta Sheep Symposium
Banff Springs Hotel
Banff.....November 19 - 21
Cathy Gallivan - Edmonton - 427-5077

(Cont'd)

Agriculture Coming Events (cont'd)

Canadian Dehy Conference
Fantasyland Hotel
Edmonton, Alberta.....November 23 - 25
Henry Dueck - Edmonton - NEPCAN Ltd.

Alberta Wheat Pool Annual Meeting
Palliser Hotel
Calgary, Alberta.....November 23 - December 4
Bruno Friesen - Calgary - 290-4910

Christian Farmers Federation of Alberta - Annual Convention
Nisku Inn
Nisku.....November 26
Gus Polman - Edmonton - 428-6981

Landscape Alberta Nursery Trades Association
Annual Meeting and Convention
Convention Centre
Calgary, Alberta.....December 3 - 5
Brendan Casement - Brooks - 362-3391

Artificial Insemination & Dairy Herd Management Program
Olds College
Olds, Alberta.....December 7 - 18
Ralph Kunkel - Olds College - 556-8344

Alberta Cattle Commission - Annual Meeting
Coast Terrace Inn
Edmonton.....December 7 - 9
Joanne Lemke - Calgary - 291-4800

1988

Alberta Branch, Canadian Seed Growers - Convention
Banff, Alberta.....January

Artificial Insemination & Beef Herd Management Program
Olds College
Olds, Alberta.....January 4 - 15
Ralph Kunkel - Olds College - 556-8344

Farm Equipment Dealers' Association of Alberta - B.C.
Fantasyland Hotel
West Edmonton Mall, Edmonton, Alberta.....January 21 - 23
William Lipsey - Calgary - 250-7581

Alberta Pork Seminar
Banff Springs Hotel
Banff, Alberta.....January 27 - 29
University of Alberta - Faculty of Extension - Edmonton - 432-2406

(Cont'd)

Agriculture Coming Events (cont'd)

Provincial Agriculture Service Board Conference
Capri Centre
Red Deer, Alberta.....January 31 - February 3
Ferrin Leavitt - Edmonton - 427-2171

Beef Cow-Calf Production Course
Olds College
Olds, Alberta.....February 1 - 5
Ralph Kunkel - Olds College - 556-8344

Alberta Beef Symposium
Live cattle marketing - Options for the future
Edmonton.....February 2 - 3
Doug Walkey - 340-7612

Purebred Beef Cattle Marketing Workshop
Olds College
Olds, Alberta.....February 8 - 12
Ralph Kunkel - Olds College - 556-8344

Managing Agricultural Technology for Profit 1988 (MATFP)
Kananaskis Lodge
Mount Allan, Alberta.....March 6 - 9
Gerd Andres - Olds - 556-4240

Artificial Insemination and Dairy Herd Management Program
Olds College
Olds, Alberta.....March 7 - 18
Ralph Kunkel - Olds College - 556-8344

Farming for the Future Conference
Marlborough Inn
Calgary, Alberta.....March 18
Dr. Yilma Teklemariam - Edmonton - 427-1956

American Dairy Science Association Annual Conference
University of Alberta
Edmonton, Alberta.....June 26 - 29
Dairy Processing Branch - Wetaskiwin - 429-2735

National Soil Conservation Week
Special Alberta events.....March 10 - 16
John Hermans - Edmonton - 422-4385

Coming Agriculture Events (cont'd)

Coming Agricultural Events

1. Do you know of any provincial (Alberta), national or international agricultural meetings, conferences or conventions coming in January, February, March, April 1988 or any events omitted in the attached list? Please state the name of the event.

2. What are the dates? Please be sure to state whether 1988 or 1989.

3. Where is the event being held? Include city or town; hotel and convention centre if known.

4. Please give the name, city or town, and phone number of a contact person for each event listed.

5. This form has been completed by (organization):

Please return this form by December 14, 1987 to:

Print Media Branch
Information Services Division
J.G. O'Donoghue Building
7000 - 113 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T6H 5T6

(Coming Agricultural Events is published four times a year in Agri-News. The next edition will be printed January 4, 1988.)

AGRI-NEWS

September 14, 1987

For immediate release

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September 14, 1987
For immediate release

Watch for high nitrate feeds

Producers should watch for high levels of nitrates in cereal crops used as a pasture, silage, or harvested as greenfeed.

"Although nitrate poisoning in livestock is not a new problem," reports Wray Whitmore, a ruminant nutritionist with Alberta Agriculture's soils and animal nutrition lab in Edmonton, " it is one that producers should be aware of now."

Normally an accumulation of nitrates in cereal crops is caused by conditions such as drought, hail, heavy fertilization, warm cloudy days, and frost.

This year, however, the lack of rain in June and part of July, followed by heavy rains in August, have produced rapid secondary growth which may be high in nitrates.

"Because this secondary growth cannot be harvested for grain, producers will probably graze it or put it up as greenfeed, and it may be potentially dangerous to livestock," says Whitmore.

To avoid the risk of livestock poisoning, producers are advised to take a forage sample and have it tested for nitrates. Oats are the most potentially dangerous crop, followed by barley, then wheat. Some weeds can also be high in nitrates.

Livestock are poisoned when rumen microbes convert the nitrates contained in feed into nitrites. These nitrites are absorbed into the bloodstream of the animal and change the oxygen-transporting hemoglobin molecules into methemoglobin which is unable to transport oxygen from the lungs to the body tissues. Therefore, nitrate poisoning is in fact suffocation.

Although research has shown that the nitrate levels that cause reduced performance and death loss are highly variable, Whitmore says for practical purposes it is best to play it safe.

(Cont'd)

Watch for high nitrate feeds (cont'd)

Here are the guidelines followed by Alberta Agriculture's Animal Nutrition Section:

Less than 0.5% NO_3	Generally "safe" with no adverse effect on performance expected.
0.5 - 1.0% NO_3	CAUTION - may cause reduced growth or milk production, possibly a few abortions.
Greater than 1.0% NO_3	HIGH NITRATE FEED - expect reduced growth and milk production, abortions and death loss.

"A rush nitrate test can be performed in 24 hours," says Whitmore.

Tests can be done by private labs, or producers can take their forage sample to an Alberta Agriculture regional livestock specialist or district agriculturist for forwarding to the soils and animal nutrition lab in Edmonton.

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Contact: Wray Whitmore
436-9150

September 14, 1987
For immediate release

New chief of shelterbelt program announced

A long-time horticulture specialist with Alberta Agriculture in Brooks has accepted a new position with the department in Edmonton.

Brendan Casement, a research specialist at the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center has taken over the job as shelterbelt specialist at the Alberta Tree Nursery and Horticulture Research Centre in northeast Edmonton.

Casement has been with the Brooks centre since 1971.

In making the announcement, George Grainger, director at the tree nursery, says Casement will have overall responsibility for the department's long-standing shelterbelt program.

Since coming under the department's jurisdicition in 1950, the program has produced more than 40 million trees and shrubs to be used across the province for soil conservation projects.

Casement replaces Herman Oosterhuis, who retired earlier this year after 20 years as program supervisor.

The new shelterbelt program head received his bachelor of science degree from the University of Durham in England, in 1960. He received his master of science degree in horticulture from the University of Alberta in 1975.

His career includes working three years with the Alberta Agriculture Dairy Lab in Edmonton from 1964 to 1967.

In Brooks, Casement specialized in research and extension work dealing with hardiness trials in ornamental shrubs and trees.

In his new role he will be responsible for the annual production and distribution of an estimated 2.5 million trees and shrubs across the province.

He will also be in charge of woody plant research including hardiness trials of new tree and shrub varieties.

Casement will be placing a new emphasis on shelterbelt extension, using a variety of means to promote the role and value of shelterbelts in soil and property protection.

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Contact: George Grainger - Brendan Casement
973-3351

Alberta Agriculture, Print Media Branch, Phone: (403) 427-2121

Editor's Note

Following are three articles on the federal government's Farm Debt Review Board, which through its office in Edmonton, provides service to Alberta farmers facing financial difficulties.

The articles, which can either run as a series or stand alone, provide an overview of the work of the board since it was created last fall.

Attached is a list of the current appointed members of the Farm Debt Review Board in Alberta. Editors and news directors can contact area representatives for local comment on the board.

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Farm Debt Review Board (Alberta)

CHAIRMAN

Dennis Hueppelsheuser
R.R. 1
Blackfalds, Alberta
Phone: 885-4887

GENERAL MANAGER

Bob Hadley
Farm Debt Review Board
808, 10179 - 105 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
Phone: 420-4764

BOARD MEMBERS (Alberta North)

Mrs. Anne Harpe
Box 137
Valhalla Centre, Alberta
Phone: 356-3982

James Skitsko
1001 Empire Building
Edmonton, Alberta
Phone: 424-5146

Steve Shybunka
Box 148
Two Hills, Alberta
Phone: 657-3395

Mrs. Jonnette Hamilton
Box 6060
Wetaskiwin, Alberta
Phone: 352-3301

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September 14, 1987
For immediate release

Debt review board helps farmers get back on track

Farmers don't have to be on their financial death beds to use the services of the federal Farm Debt Review Board.

Sure the agency works with producers facing some tough financial problems, but a large part of the review board's job is providing advice that will help keep farmers in business.

In most cases, the board simply helps to get farmers and creditors talking so that satisfactory agreements can be reached. It acts as a sounding board - an unbiased third party that has the farmer's interest at heart.

It can't work miracles by reversing the economy, or saving an operation hopelessly in debt; but, if there is a solution, board advisors will put it on the table.

Bob Hadley, general manager of the Alberta office of the Farm Debt Review Board in Edmonton, says the board acts as a mediator and prefers its advisory role.

"There has been some call from farm organizations for boards to assume the power to impose settlements," he says. "But we don't feel additional powers are needed. Mediated settlements are better. We feel that people meeting and agreeing on a plan of action is going to give that agreement a much greater chance of success. There is no guarantee either, that all imposed settlements would favor the farmers."

The Farm Debt Review Board was created by the federal government in 1986. Boards were established in each province (two each in Ontario, Saskatchewan and Alberta) to play a third-party role in working with farmers facing money problems.

Hadley says the continuing downturn in agricultural markets, complicated by eroding farm equity, is forcing many producers into financial difficulty.

Situations range from producers having trouble making payments on machinery, to operations overcome by debt, facing foreclosure by a bank.

(Cont'd)

Since the Alberta board began operation it has handled more than 600 applications. Agreements have been reached in about 75 per cent of these cases. Negotiations continue with many of the remaining applications.

Hadley says the majority of negotiated agreements allow farmers to continue operating their farms under arrangements which will hopefully work them back to sound financial footing.

"About 15 per cent of the cases result in the farmer leaving the operation," he says. "This may come about through a decision the farmer has already made himself, or maybe an agreement was reached after reviewing the situation.

"Realistically there are some cases where the debt load against the operation is so great that recovery is impossible. Getting out of the business is certainly a last resort, but we feel we are not doing the farmer any favor by making a recommendation that will only prolong the agony."

Once the board receives an application it initiates a review procedure. It draws on a bank of about 75 farm-orientated financial specialists under contract to the board, and assigns a field worker to review the operation.

The field worker meets with the farmer and takes a serious look at the farm operation and financial situation. The farmer, the creditors and field worker will then meet with the farm debt review board to work out an agreement.

"The key thing is that this is a human process," says Hadley. "The board takes time to meet with all those that are involved and helps to open communications between all parties.

"We help people identify arrangements and options. There are a lot of misperceptions among farmers about what creditors can and cannot do. The board also realizes that creditors cannot afford to carry losses on their books either."

(Cont'd)

Debt review board helps farmers get back on track (cont'd)

The general manager says financial problems can bring out a wide range of emotions. He says some farmers may feel embarassed, incompetent or angry, while others are confused and have a hard time understanding what went wrong.

"People need to have an outlet to discuss the situation and their feelings," he says. "Many people don't like to talk to their neighbors or even their own families about financial problems, and it can become a real burden. A lot of times the feelings have been pent up and the farmer just needs to blow off some steam."

Hadley says while the review process is confidential, farmers must be honest with themselves, the field workers, and the creditors if an agreement is to be reached.

For an application or more information on the Farm Debt Review Board contact the Edmonton office, toll free at 1-800-642-3890.

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Contact: Bob Hadley
420-4764

September 14, 1987
For immediate release

Two types of problems covered in debt review board act

About 50 farmers a month in Alberta are coming to the federal Farm Debt Review Board for assistance in dealing with some kind of money problem.

Concerns range from a recognition that there just isn't enough money to make all the payments, to the more drastic reality of a pending foreclosure.

The board in itself doesn't have legislative powers, but backed by a team of financial specialists, it has the ability to get people talking about their problems and working out solutions with creditors that will keep most of them on the farm.

The Farm Debt Review Board was created by the federal government in 1986 to help an increasing number of farmers deal with financial problems caused by poor agricultural markets, declining land values and eroding farm equity.

One board was appointed in each of seven provinces, with two boards named in each of Alberta, Saskatchewan and Ontario.

From an office in Edmonton, the Alberta boards are chaired by Dennis Hueppelsheuser, a Blackfalds area farmer. The other 11 current board members come from across the province from as far north as La Crete in the Peace River region, to Walsh in southern Alberta.

Dividing the province north and south, a committee of board members will meet with individual farmers and creditors to work out agreements on how to best solve a financial problem.

"We play the role of a mediator to help the two parties find an agreeable solution," says Bob Hadley, the board's general manager in Edmonton. "In many cases farmers don't realize all of the options that may be available to them. And there may not have been much communication between the farmer and the creditor.

"Through the farm debt review board process we can take a third-party look at the situation and hopefully get the two sides to arrive at some agreement."

(Cont'd)

Two types of problems covered in debt review board act (cont'd)

The board can provide assistance to producers in two circumstances.

Under Section 16 of the Farm Debt Review Act, a farmer having difficulty with payments can apply for the board's help in reaching a satisfactory arrangement with the creditor.

This is a producer who sees he can't cover all his bills and needs help in devising a manageable repayment plan with creditors.

If a foreclosure or other similar action is expected, the farmer can apply for help under Section 20 of the Act. According to the Act a creditor planning to take action must advise the farmer in writing of his intentions.

"A farmer who has been advised in writing that a secured creditor intends to realize on security, or facing action by other creditors, may apply under Section 20," says Hadley.

If a Section 20 application is made it automatically imposes a legal 30-day stay of proceedings on the action until the review proceeding is complete. The stay of proceedings can be extended until the matter is resolved, to a maximum of 120 days.

Hadley says the main difference between the two sections of the Act is the legal stay of proceedings provided under Section 20.

Regardless of which section the application is made under, the board will conduct a thorough review. It has a pool of 75 financial specialists with agricultural backgrounds, available under contract, to act as field workers with producers.

"Under both types of applications, the field worker meets with the farmer, reviews the operation and makes an assessment," says Hadley.

Once the assessment is complete, the farmer, the creditors and field worker meet with the farm debt review board panel to work out a proposal.

"We can't force the farmer or the creditors to accept any proposals, but hopefully once they sit down with the board and talk it over an agreement can be reached."

The Alberta board has received more than 600 applications since it began operation last fall. About 225 of those applications were made under Section 16, while about 375 were made under Section 20.

(Cont'd)

Two types of problems covered in debt review board act (cont'd)

Hadley says at the outset the majority of applications were made under Section 20, although more are now being made under Section 16.

The general manager says the board keeps pace with the rate of applications. He says it takes about seven weeks to complete the process from the time an application is received until the final session with the board. Farmers can opt out of the review process at any time.

For an application or more information on the Farm Debt Review Board, call the toll-free number in Edmonton, 1-800-642-3890.

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Contact: Bob Hadley
420-4764

September 14, 1987
For immediate release

Toll-free number provides access to debt review board

Alberta farmers wanting an application or more information on the federal Farm Debt Review Board can contact the office at its toll-free number in Edmonton.

The board asks farmers to call 1-800-642-3890 for any information they require about the agency.

Bob Hadley, general manager of the board's Alberta office, says the board plays a mediation role in helping farmers with financial problems, work out an agreement with creditors.

Hadley says the problems can range from a producer having difficulty making a payment on a combine or tractor, to pending foreclosure action by a bank or other creditor.

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Contact: Bob Hadley
420-4764

September 14, 1987
For immediate release

EDITOR'S NOTE: A version of the following article, in the August 31 issue of Agri-News, referred to a catalogue order number which was incorrect. If you haven't yet used the article, please delete reference to "Agdex" numbers. If you have already used it, perhaps you could use this article as a follow-up to eliminate any confusion about ordering copies of the publication.

Farm management information directory available in Olds

An updated Alberta Agriculture publication which lists sources of farm management information is only available from the department's farm business management branch in Olds.

The publication, "Sources of Printed Farm Management Information from Alberta Agriculture" is available by writing to Craig Edwards, Farm Business Management Branch, Box 2000, Olds, Alberta T0M 1P0.

There is no catalogue number to be quoted. Just ask for the title.

This publication provides a listing of printed material from Alberta Agriculture's statistics branch, production and resource economics branch, market analysis branch and farm business management branch.

Also included is information on the department's print media branch and its "Publications List" the main listing for most publications from Alberta Agriculture.

Most of the publications are free to farmers, but a few are being charged for and subscription rates are shown where applicable. Mailing addresses and telephone numbers of the branches are also provided.

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Contact: Craig Edwards
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September 14, 1987
For immediate release

Leafy spurge beetles multiplying at Cardston

A European insect released at Cardston four years ago to control a noxious weed has made itself at home in Alberta, says a specialist at the Alberta Environmental Centre at Vegreville.

Dr. Alec McClay, a weed scientist at the centre, says the southern Alberta population of the Hungarian beetle, which feeds on leafy spurge, has increased from a few hundred beetles to several hundred thousand.

McClay says a monitoring program shows the beetle is having an impact on weed control.

Leafy spurge, a perennial weed with a deep and persistent creeping root system, was introduced to Canada from eastern Europe in the late 19th century.

It is an aggressive invader of pastures and other uncultivated land, and is unpalatable and toxic to cattle, says McClay. It is now widespread in Alberta particularly in the southwestern part of the province.

"The only effective herbicide for its control on uncultivated land is picloram," he says. "This, however, is a long-lived compound which readily leaches out into groundwater and streams and cannot be used in any environmentally-sensitive areas such as under trees or on riverbanks, where leafy spurge often grows."

In addition, spurge is often found in areas where the terrain makes herbicide application difficult and expensive. The specialist says other methods were needed to achieve permanent and environmentally safe control of the weed.

Scientists at the Vegreville centre, the Agriculture Canada Research Station at Regina, and the Commonwealth Institute of Biological Control Station in Switzerland, have been studying the weed's natural enemies in Europe to find biological control agents.

"The flea beetle known scientifically as Aphthona nigricutis is one of about a dozen insects from Europe which have been studied as possible biological control agents for leafy spurge," says McClay.

(Cont'd)

Leafy spurge beetles multiplying at Cardston (cont'd)

It is a shiny straw-colored beetle about three millimetres in length, quite different in appearance from the common flea-beetles which attack canola and cabbages. Extensive tests have shown this beetle will not damage any cultivated plants.

The beetles lay their eggs in summer at the base of the leafy spurge plant, and the larvae, after hatching, burrow into the soil where they feed on the roots of the spurge.

The insect is doing the most damage to the weed at this stage.

The larvae spend the winter in the soil and pupate in spring. In early July the adult beetles emerge from the soil to feed on the leaves of the spurge, mate, and lay eggs.

"About 500 of the beetles, collected in Hungary, were released at Cardston in 1983," says the specialist. "They seem to have found the conditions there to their liking, as they have increased about six-fold each year since the initial release. The total population is now in the hundreds of thousands. In the centre of the colony the population increased from 39 per square metre in 1986 to 184 per square metre in 1987."

The effects of the spurge are beginning to show. In areas where the beetle population is most dense, the spurge seems to be thinner, shorter and producing less seed.

In Manitoba, where the same beetle is being used, dramatic reductions is spurge dry weight and the number of flowering shoots have already been recorded.

"If the beetle population continues to increase as it has been doing, the prospects for biological control of leafy spurge in the Cardston area look very good," says McClay.

"The beetle colony at Cardston has already been used as a source of beetles for release in other leafy spurge infestations in Alberta. As the population increases more beetles will be available, and the redistribution program will be stepped up."

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Contact: Dr. Alex McClay
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Agri-News Briefs

NATIONAL FARM WOMEN CONFERENCE IN SASKATOON

Farm women from across Canada will meet in Saskatoon in November for a National Farm Women's Conference. Under the theme "Policies and Programs For Tomorrow", the conference will concentrate on factors that affect Canadian agriculture today and what farm women can do to benefit the future of the industry. This is the third National Farm Women's Conference to be held in Canada during the past seven years. It will have an action orientated format featuring nationally known speakers, panel discussions, resolutions and table discussions. All of these will lead to an action plan at the conclusion of the conference. The conference will be held at the Bessborough Hotel in Saskatoon November 12, 13, and 14. For reservations or more information contact Noreen Johns conference chairperson, at (306) 257-3911, or the National Farm Women's Conference Office at (306) 966-5574 or 966-5550.

MILK PRODUCTION UP IN LAST DAIRY YEAR

Alberta dairymen produced slightly more milk in the 1986-87 dairy year according to figures released by an Alberta Agriculture market specialist. Allan Dooley, a dairy and poultry analyst with the department in Edmonton says milk production estimated at 20.5 million kilograms in the 1986-87 dairy year is about two per cent higher than last year. However, cream production, estimated at 722,000 kilograms of butterfat was down about 13.6 per cent from 1985-86 levels. Cheddar cheese production in the province dropped about seven per cent during the dairy year, while specialty cheese production increased about 6.7 per cent. There was also a 2.6 per cent production increase in butter and a 7.8 per cent increase in production of other dairy products. While production in most areas were up, prices for farmers were down. According to the payment formula the price paid to farmers follows the cost production trend. Because of declining feed costs in Alberta, producer prices for Class 1 milk declined three times during the dairy year and in August were the lowest in the country at $47.15 per hectalitre.

(Cont'd)

MANURE IS A GOOD FERTILIZER SOURCE

This may not be big news to many farmers, but manure is a valuable component in crop production, according to specialists at the Agriculture Canada research station at Lethbridge. Dr. T.G. Sommerfeldt, a soil scientist says research shows manure has many advantages. As a fertilizer, manure is competitive with commercial fertilizers if the hauling distances are less than 15 miles, he says. It is a slow release-type fertilizer and the benefits extend beyond the year in which it is applied. Reports from England indicate residual effects of manure can persist in the soil for at least 40 years. Sommerfeldt says manure can improve the land and affect soil properties in ways not fully understood. It mellows the soil and improves the physical composition of problem soils. Where manure was applied to a Lethbridge clay loam, the energy required to pull farm implements was reduced. It is also considered a good amendment in the reclamation of saline and degraded soils. For more information contact Dr. Sommerfeldt at 327-4561.

CHECK EGG SHELLS FOR SPOOKS

According to an old Irish superstition, witches were thought to use empty egg shells as homes, says the Canadian Egg Marketing Agency. To avoid bewitched egg shells (and the bad luck they brought), people smashed up the egg shell after eating the egg. And the next time you are grinding your shells remember another little know fact, that the average chicken lays about six times its weight in eggs in just one year.

BE SURE BEFORE PICKING MUSHROOMS

Alberta Agriculture specialists in Brooks advise people to be sure of what kind of wild mushroom they are picking, before they pop it into the frying pan. Cathy Linowski, information office with the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center, says the wet weather has produced a good mushroom crop this year, but not all are edible. "Mushrooms found growing in the wild or in lawns should not be eaten unless the collector is absolutely certain as to their identity," says Linowski. She says there are good mushroom identification books and courses available and the Brooks centre can provide some assistance. However the best advice is 'if in doubt - throw it out'.

AGRI-NEWS

September 21, 1987

For immediate release

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

September 21, 1987
For immediate release

Preconditioning program may set new record

More Alberta farmers are expected to send more pounds of beef to market this fall as a record number participate in the calf preconditioning program.

Brian Harris, co-ordinator of the Alberta Certified Precondition Feeder (ACPF) program expects about 36,000 calves will be enroled under the program this year, an increase of about 4,000 from 1986.

Harris says more producers are becoming aware that the program does produce healthier, heavier calves on sale day and the costs of extra feed and management are more than recovered.

"I don't think it is unrealistic to expect at least 100 pounds more weight on calves that are preconditioned as compared to calves that are not," he says. "It is expected calves will gain about two pounds a day and if they are on the program from 45 to 60 days the gains could be as high as 120 pounds."

Harris says the bonus for producers in preconditioning calves is in the extra weight gained. He says traditionally there has also been a premium price of four to five cents per pound paid for preconditioned calves, but that is no guarantee.

"There may always be a premium paid, but that is up to the buyers," he says. "The real advantage to producers is in those extra pounds of beef. And right now with good markets and relatively low production costs the advantages are there."

The preconditioning program involves weaning calves early and putting them on good rations well in advance of sale day to better prepare the animals for the stress of being hauled, handled and put into a feedlot.

Among the steps Harris says to be taken first, the producer should find out the sale dates and locations and decide on the day to vaccinate, tag and finish any dehorning or castration. Processing must be completed no less than three weeks before sale day.

(Cont'd)

Farmers should contact their veterinarian who will get tags and certificates from the local district agriculturist. (The veterinarian visit to certify the calves is paid by Alberta Agriculture for the first three years the producer is on the program).

The calves have to be weaned and on the program at least 45 days before sale day, but Harris recommends farmers will get better results doing some preparation work with the calves two months before the sale.

He suggests processing calves 60 to 70 days before the sale and putting them back with the cows for a couple weeks before weaning.

Processing should include vaccination with IBR/PI^3 (red nose) seven-way or eight-way clostridial. Another vaccine required under the program this year is Hemophilus vaccine which is used against ITEME, a disease commonly known as "sleeper syndrome". Processing should also include warble treatment and replacing regular eartags with ACPF tags in the right ear.

"Start the calves on a grain ration of one to two pounds per head per day, plus good hay or silage and work the calves up to five or six pounds of grain by the second week," says the co-ordinator.

The grain ration should consist of good quality oats, or an oat-barley mix, plus a good quality supplement to balance the protein, a trace mineral salt, and in some cases extra vitamins should be provided.

"When starting the calves on grain be sure all the calves are eating," says Harris. "If only a few calves are eating most of the grain, try limiting the hay or feeding the grain for only a short time each day to prevent aggressive calves from overeating."

He says make sure calves don't get too fat or they will be discounted on sale day.

"With growthy calves and a well balanced ration it is amazing how much grain these calves can handle and how fast they will gain without getting fat," he says.

The day before the sale it is suggested the producer cut back on grain and fill the calves with good grass hay only. When trucking calves be sure the truck is clean and well bedded. Do not overcrowd. This should ensure calves arrive at the sale in a presentable condition.

(Cont'd)

"When being shipped for sale be sure a copy of the preconditioning certificate is attached to the manifest," says Harris. "It is required by the district agriculturist to make up the sale catalogue for the buyer. All the effort that has been put into preconditioning should pay off on sale day."

Harris says producers can sell preconditioned calves at the auction of their choice, however there are 19 sales in Alberta specifically planned for preconditioned calves. These sales begin November 26 in Killam, southeast of Camrose and continue throughout Alberta until December 11 with a final one in Lethbridge.

For more information on the program contact a district agriculturist, veterinarian or auction sale manager.

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Contact: Brian Harris
340-5336

EDITOR'S NOTE

Although the preceeding story has no specific time element, it is providing information to farmers who may want to take action six to eight weeks before calf sales begin. With calf-sale season starting within the next few weeks the story is relevant now and into October.

Also provided is a list of sales specifically organized for preconditioned calves.

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1987 ALBERTA PRECONDITIONED CALF SALES

(Dates set as of September 10, 1987)

November 26	Thursday 12:30 p.m.	Killam Auction Mart (Killam 672-4496)
November 27	Friday 2:00 p.m.	Lacombe Auction Market (Lacombe 782-3825)
November 27	Friday 9:00 a.m.	Perlich Bros. Sales Pavilion (Lethbridge 329-3101) (Approx. 1000 head)
December 1	Tuesday 11:00 a.m.	Stettler Auction Mart (1971) Ltd. (Stettler 742-2368) (Approx. 300-400 head)
December 2	Wednesday 10:00 a.m.	Highwood Auction Co. Ltd. (High River 652-3343) (Approx. 900 head)
December 2	Wednesday 12 noon	Innisfail Auction Market (Innisfail 227-3166) (Approx. 2000 head)
December 3	Thursday 10:00 a.m.	Fort Macleod Auction Market (Fort Macleod 553-3315)
December 4	Friday 10:00 a.m.	Edmonton Public Stockyards (Edmonton 473-5776) (Approx. 1000-1500 head)
December 4	Friday 10:00 a.m.	Grande Prairie Auction Market (Grande Prairie 532-3949) (Approx. 1000 head)
December 4	Friday 11:00 a.m.	Balog Auction Market (Lethbridge 320-1980) (Approx. 1000 head)
December 4	Friday 11:00 a.m.	Rimbey Auction Market (Rimbey 843-2439)
December 5	Saturday 10:00 a.m.	Vold Jones Vold Auction (Ponoka 783-5561) (Approx. 2000 head)
December 5	Saturday 1:00 p.m.	Cole's Auction Market (Rocky Mountain House 845-6103)

...../2

1987 PRECONDITIONED CALF SALES - continued....

December 7	Monday 9:30 a.m.	Nilsson Livestock Ltd. (Clyde 348-5893) (Approx. 3000 head)
December 7	Monday 10:00 a.m.	Olds Auction Mart (Olds 556-3655) (Approx. 300-500 head)
December 7	Monday 11:00 a.m.	Burnt Lake Livestock Mart Ltd. (Red Deer 347-6100) (Approx. 1500 head)
December 9	Wednesday 1:00 p.m.	Community Auction Sales Assoc. Pincher Creek 627-3466) (Approx. 400 head)
December 11	Friday 9:00 a.m.	Perlich Bros. Sales Pavilion (Lethbridge 329-3101) (Approx. 1000 head)
December 11	Friday 11:00 a.m.	Balog Auction Market (Lethbridge 320-1980) (Approx. 1000 head)

Alberta Agriculture, Print Media Branch, Phone: (403) 427-2121

September 21, 1987
For immediate release

Terms of forage analysis

Alberta farmers shouldn't rely on 'olds rules of thumb' when trying to determine the feed value or quality of forages, says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

Wray Whitmore, a ruminant nutritionist with the nutrition section in Edmonton says, the look, feel and smell of forage will offer an indication of quality, but not guarantee an accurate asessemnt of feed value.

"Forage quality is commonly believed to be related to physical appearance," says the specialist. "Factors such as leafiness, color and lack of weathering are important, but are poor predictors of nutrient content.

"Nutrient content is critical in forage quality determinations and can only be estimated after chemical analyses. Feed testing goes hand in hand with the physical appearance of the forage."

And the nutrition specialist says, while a forage analysis can be a useful tool, often some of the terms used to describe the condition or quality of hay and silage can be confusing.

Whitmore says a brief definition of the terms may help producers.

"Now that forage harvesting is nearly complete, it is time to have the forage tested for nutrient content," he says. "A refresher course on the various terms used in forage analysis may be in order."

Whitmore has provided a brief glossary of terms used in forage analysis results by feed labs in the province.

COMMON FORAGE ANALYSIS TERMS

MOISTURE-FREE BASIS- the concentration of a nutrient in the completely dry portion of the ration. All nutrients are in the dry portion. To convert moisture-free values to as-fed values (normal moisture value of the ration fed to animals) use the following formula:

$$\text{As Fed} = \text{Analysis (dry)} \times \frac{(100 - \%\ \text{moisture})}{100}$$

(Cont'd)

Terms of forage analysis (cont'd)

FIBRE - refers to the "coarse" least digestible portion of a feed and is found in the greatest levels in roughages. Acid detergent fiber (ADF) which extracts mainly cellulose, lignin, silica and some minerals has a relationship with digestible energy (DE) of forages; the digestibility of a forage decreases as the ADF component increases. Neutral detergent fibre (NDF), commonly called cell walls, has a relationship with forage intake; as NDF increased in the forage, voluntary intake decreases.

ENERGY - energy measurements such as digestible energy (DE), total digestible nutrients (TDN) or net energy (NE) are all estimates and cannot be determined by chemical methods.

PROTEIN - crude protein is determined in the laboratory by first measuring the nitrogen content of the feed, then % nitrogen X 6.25 = % protein. By itself it is not a reliable indication of quality. Protein is absolutely essential for growth, reproduction and maintenance.

ACID DETERGENT INSOLUBLE NITROGEN (ADIN) - the measure used to estimate the effect of excessive heating on forages. As heat damage increases the ADIN component of the feed increases and the availability of the crude protein to the animal decreases.

NITRATES - one of the raw materials taken up from the soil by plants, used for making protein in plant cells. High levels of nitrates can accumulate in plants that have been stressed by hail, frost or drought and can reduce animal performance or in extreme cases cause death.

Contact: Wray Whitmore
436-9150

Alberta Agriculture, Print Media Branch, Phone: (403) 427-2121

September 21, 1987
For immediate release

Nick Nation named pathology branch head

A veterinary pathologist who has worked at Alberta Agriculture regional veterinary labs in Fairview and Airdrie has been named to a senior post in Edmonton.

Dr. Nick Nation, who has just completed his Ph.D. thesis at the University of Calgary, has been named head of the animal pathology branch responsible for the four diagnostic labs operated by the department.

His appointment was announced by Dr. Terry Church, acting director of the animal health division in Edmonton. Nation replaces Dr. Gerald Johnson who left the department in 1986 to assume a post with the Atlantic Veterinary College.

The animal pathology branch provides a diagnostic service to farmers and veterinarians, determining the cause of sickness or death in livestock.

Through any of the four labs - the regional facilities in Lethbridge, Airdrie and Fairview and the main lab in Edmonton - the branch will conduct examinations on specimens or carcasses to diagnose the source of problems.

The branch offers a similar service to the poultry industry as well as providing an analysis of livestock reproduction problems.

Born in England and raised in Calgary, Nation attended Simon Fraser University in Vancouver before attending Western College of Veterinary Medicine in Saskatoon where he graduated as a doctor of veterinary medicine in 1974. He went on to earn his master's degree in veterinary science, specializing in pathology, at WCVM in 1976.

Nation joined Alberta Agriculture's regional lab in Fairview in 1976 and later transferred to the Airdrie lab in 1978. After passing the American College of Veterinary Pathologists examinations in 1980 he was appointed head of the Airdrie lab.

In 1985, Nation took an education leave from the department to pursue his Ph.D. at the University of Calgary. His thesis involved the study of the effects on nerve cells of certain drugs used in animal production.

After completing his thesis he returned to the department as pathology branch head.

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Contact: Nick Nation - 436-8903
Terry Church 427-2166

September 14, 1987
For immediate release

Important issues face Alberta honey producers

Some major issues with a direct bearing on the future of the honey industry in Alberta, will be on the agenda in Edmonton in November as international bee specialists gather for a symposium.

Alberta beekeepers are urged to set aside time for the five-day meeting of the Alberta Beekeepers Association which will include a three-nation symposium on current industry issues such as exotic mites and Africanized bees.

Paul van Westendorp, Alberta Agriculture's provincial apiculture specialist, says the future direction of these issues could have "profound ramifications" on both the Alberta and Canadian honey industry.

The Tri-Country Symposium involving Canada, the United States and Mexico is being held in conjunction with the Alberta Beekeepers Association annual meeting and the Canadian Honey Council Annual Convention, November 9 to 14.

van Westendorp expects speakers from the three participating countries as well as Europe to participate in the discussion.

While disease and pests are always a concern to the industry an insect known as the tracheal mite is a current issue. Although not found it Alberta it has created problems for beekeepers in other countries.

"There has been an increasing concern about the effects the tracheal mite will have on the industry when it has found its way into Alberta's honeybee colonies," says van Westendorp.

Although the majority of Alberta's 1,700 beekeepers do overwinter their bees, many beekeepers still depend on the importation of queens and packages (honeybee stock) annually from the United States.

"In consultation with U.S. officials, queen producers and beekeepers associations, great efforts are made to ensure the continued supply of certified mite-free queens and packages from U.S. sources," says the specialist.

"The industry hopes the certification program, put in place in selected areas in the U.S., will remain effective to keep the mite out of Canada until such time that sufficient alternate sources have been found."

(Cont'd)

van Westendorp says there is no market source that can supply the quantity of honeybee stock that Alberta now requires.

Specialists will also be talking about the spread of the a highly aggressive strain of honey bees, known as Africanized bees.

This strain, released accidentally in South America, are gradually spreading north and are already found in some parts of Mexico. Both the U.S. and Mexican governments are trying to stop the bees from advancing further.

"Realistically it is possible these bees could avoid control measures and eventually reach the U.S. and Canada," says van Westendorp.

He says from a beekeeper's point of view Africanized bees have shown to be excellent honey producers, but they have management and perhaps legal drawbacks.

As part of the five-day meeting, the Canadian Honey Council will give an overview of the honey market situation and honey product promotion efforts.

For more information on the conference contact Louise Zwaenepoel at the Alberta Beekeepers Association, 2434 - 104 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6J 4J8 or phone 435-0306.

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Contact: Paul van Westendorp
427-0341

September 21, 1987
For immediate release

Alberta ram is doing his part for progress

One of the top selling rams at the Alberta Agriculture/Olds College ram sale this year will be doing its part in developing revolutionary sheep breeding technology in North America.

The suffolk ram, sold by Brian Kure of Innisfail, has become the first Alberta-bred ram to participate in the new field of semen collection and artificial insemination of sheep.

The ram is part of a co-ordinated project involving Alberta Agriculture, Olds College, Agriculture Canada and Western Breeders International Ltd. of Balzac.

It will provide semen to be used in developing and promoting Alberta sheep breeds and AI technology in the world market.

The young sheep was one of 164 rams entered for test at the Alberta Ram Test Station this year. The station is operated jointly by Alberta Agriculture and Olds College.

After completing the test station program, surpassing the station average for daily gain and meeting medical requirements, the Suffolk ram was one of 64 offered for sale.

It was one of two bought by Agriculture Canada under a Sire Loan Program which is designed to assist in livestock industry development.

"We currently conduct the program for two classes of livestock," says John Ross, production officer with Ag Canada in Edmonton. "Presently we buy boars for the hog industry and rams for the sheep industry."

"The idea is to provide these animals for the development of artificial insemination technology. Once the technology is off and running we phase out of the program and let the industry handle it from there."

Ross says because swine AI techniques are becoming more established and the process is increasingly accepted by the industry, Ag Canada's role in providing boars under the program is declining.

(Cont'd)

This Suffolk ram bought by Agriculture Canada at the Alberta Ram Test Station Sale has found a home at Western Breeders International Ltd. in Balzac. Shown with the ram from left are John Ross, of Agriculture Canada, Don Dufault and Dorien Brosnihan of Western Breeders.

The buyers and the seller of two of the top rams sold at the Alberta Ram Test Station Sale are pictured with their outstanding animals. Left photo, Susan Hosford and Don Forestier of Edberg, Alberta are seen with the Suffolk ram that tied for the highest average daily gain at the test station. Sold for $2,800, the ram was bought jointly by Sudon Suffolks, owned by Hosford and Forestier, and Fowler Suffolks owned by Chester and Rilla Fowler of Airdrie. Right photo, the other ram that tied for highest average daily gain was sold by Walt Strand of Lethbridge to Wild and Wooly Sheep Enterprise of Redwater, Alberta. Dennis and Janet Pasichney paid $1,500 for the ram.

Alberta ram doing his part for progress (cont'd)

However, the sheep AI business is a different story. The two Alberta sheep rams bought by the department this year were a first for Western Canada.

Only one of those bought by the department eventually made the grade to qualify for the semen collection service.

Although Ag Canada retains ownership, the ram has been turned over to Western Breeders International Ltd. at Balzac for use at its International Ram Centre. This is one of a few centres of its kind in North America and one of the few in the world that is focusing efforts on sheep semen production and developing AI technology. The centre is in the process of establishing a semen collection service for private breeders in Canada.

"This whole area is very new," says Dorien Brosnihan, Western Breeders international projects co-ordinator. "There is a great deal of interest around the world in Alberta sheep breeds, but we have yet to develop the resources and the technology to supply the demand.

"Even in major sheep producing countries such as the Soviet Union, China and Australia the technology to freeze semen and improve AI techniques is in its infant stages. We can learn some things from them but they are also learning from us."

Along with the lone Alberta ram, Brosnihan says the company has imported, on behalf of some of its Amercian customers, 20 Merino sheep rams from Australia. These rams will provide seed for the semen collection service and for use in AI promotion.

For more information on the sire loan program or sheep AI technology contact Agriculture Canada in Edmonton at 420-2800, or Western Breeders at 295-8481.

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Contact: Cathy Gallivan
427-5077

September 21, 1987
For immediate release

Semen collection service could change sheep industry

A Calgary-area company, internationally known for its work in livestock genetics, is developing new technology which could revolutionize the sheep industry in North America.

Western Breeders International Ltd. of Balzac, which is leading the field in sheep artificial insemination techniques, is launching the continent's first commercial ram semen collection service.

A company spokesman says the new breeding services will have a long-term impact on improving the quality of Alberta sheep breeds and expanding the size of the industry not only in Alberta, but across Canada.

Dorien Brosnihan, international projects co-ordinator with Western's International Ram Centre, says unlike the dairy and beef industry where AI service and semen collection is old hat, the technology is brand new in the sheep industry.

"It's not only new but it's quite different," he says. "Even the major sheep producing countries such as Australia, China and the Soviet Union do not have the technology perfected. They are also in the very early stages of developing these techniques.

"Many countries around the world are interested in the quality of the sheep breeds we have in Alberta. If we can establish a bank of high quality semen and perfect the AI process, the sky is the limit."

He says the company encourages any Alberta sheep breeder interested in semen production to contact the company.

"We have no bank of semen available, and yet there is a market out there," he says. "Any breeders in Alberta or Western Canada with good quality rams that meet the grade and can produce semen that can be frozen, should consider the service."

Brosnihan says the sheep breeder would retain ownership of the stored semen. It could be sold internationally or locally, or simply held in reserve as insurance against the death or injury of a high performance ram now in service.

(Cont'd)

Semen collection service could change sheep industry (cont'd)

Lamb production numbers associated with the use of frozen semen are staggering compared to natural pen breeding.

Brosnihan says by AI breeding with frozen semen the number of lambs produced from one ram in a year could exceed 30,000.

"In a natural breeding arrangement one ram can breed enough sheep to produce about 40 lambs a year," he says. "By collecting and freezing semen and using the latest techniques of artifical insemination that same ram could produce as many as 30,000 lambs a year. These numbers can have a significant impact on the industry."

Freezing ram semen is not as simple as it sounds. The specialist says a ram first has to have a tested performance record. Secondly, it has to be able to produce the semen. Third, the semen has to be freezable.

"Not every ram produces semen that can be frozen," says Brosnihan. "For some reason there are individual differences among rams that makes some semen suitable for freezing and other semen unsuitable. It's a difference between rams and not a difference between breeds.

"But if these three factors prove out, then we can build a bank of semen and have the supply needed to serve our own industry as well as the international market. We can improve blood lines in Alberta and meet the world wide demand for Alberta sheep semen."

The Western Breeders spokesman said with the Soviet Union running about 150 million head of sheep, China with another 100 million head, and Australia with about 160 million head, there is a huge market for top quality sheep semen from Alberta.

"There are already enquiries from the United States and from Europe, and interest being shown from these other major sheep producers. It is a matter now of collecting the semen and improving AI technology."

For more information on sheep semen collection, contact Brosnihan at the International Ram Centre in Balzac at 295-8481.

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Contact: Dorien Brosnihan
295-8481

September 21, 1987
For immediate release

AI technique brings new life to sheep industry

There's more than one way to breed a ewe, but specialists are now trying to refine a new artificial insemination technique which could dramatically change the sheep industry.

Specialists at Western Breeders International Ltd. at Balzac and at Olds College in Olds are mastering a new AI process known as a laparascopy. Slightly more complex and more expensive than the typical cervical AI process, the procedure opens the door for the use of frozen ram semen.

And use of frozen semen for the sheep industry is like trading in a stage-coach for a space shuttle.

Dorien Brosnihan, international projects co-ordinator with Western Breeders, says the two traditional options for breeding sheep are the natural method of exposing a ram to ewes, or the cervical AI procedure.

But, he says, only fresh semen can be used in the cervical process and a ewe must be serviced within 24 hours of collecting semen from the stud ram.

"This is a very limiting process," he says. "It's like the early days of the dairy AI industry when the technician had to collect the semen and then make the farm visit to service the cow the same day."

But the new process, introduced to Alberta by an Australian specialist brought in by Western Breeders, brings new possibilities to not only the AI industry, but to the sheep industry as a whole.

Brosnihan says by AI breeding with frozen semen the number of lambs produced from one ram in a year could exceed 30,000.

"In a natural breeding arrangement one ram can breed enough sheep to produce about 40 lambs a year," he says. "Using the cervical AI method it is expected one ram could produce 1,300 lambs in a year. By collecting and freezing semen and using the latest techniques of artificial insemination that same ram could produce as many as 30,000 lambs a year. These numbers can have a significant impact on the industry. We can use rams that are genetic leaders to greatly improve breed quality. The AI process allows us to promote Alberta sheep breeds around the world."

(Cont'd)

AI technique brings new life to sheep industry (cont'd)

Dr. Robin Knudsen, head of Olds College animal science division, says the college is interested in teaching the new technique to sheep producers if the demand is there. He says producers interested in providing demonstration animals and learning the process should contact the college.

Using the laparascopy technique, the ewe is placed on its back in a cradle. After applying a local anesthetic, two trocars are used to puncture the abdomen. In one opening a fibre optics device is inserted to allow the technician to see what he is doing. In the other trocar an AI sheath, similar to that used for cervical AI, is inserted and semen is implanted directly into the uterus.

Once the process is complete, the trocars are removed, the puncture wounds sprayed with a disinfectant, and the animal is returned to the pasture.

A well-trained technician can complete the process in under two minutes per ewe.

"It's a relatively simple, painless procedure, with very good conception rates," says Brosnihan. "It does require training and use of fairly expensive equipment. It's not the type of process that someone with 10 head of sheep is going to get set up for. But for the producer with 200 head of ewes it would be worthwhile."

The specialists says Western Breeders hopes to be able to offer the service once it establishes its semen collection service at the International Ram Centre at Balzac.

In the meantime, Dr. Knudsen says Olds College is anxious to offer training in the new AI procedure. He says it may be possible for Olds College to someday offer a team of technicians able to provide the procedure to the sheep industry.

As well he says the college is interested in designing seminars for producers.

(Cont'd)

"I would like to see seminars offered on a demonstration basis where interested producers would provide the ewes and learn-by-doing under the supervision of a college instructor," he says.

"There are no seminars planned, but we would like to see how many producers are interesting in learning the technique."

For more information on the AI procedure, contact Dorien Brosnihan in Balzac at 295-8481 or Dr. Harvie Cole in Olds at 556-8320.

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Contact: Dorien Brosnihan
295-8481

Dr. Robin Kundsen
556-8281

September 21, 1987
For immediate release

Alternate crops conference planned for Lethbridge

A three-day conference on crop alternatives sponsored by Alberta Agriculture and the Pulse Grower's Association of Alberta will be held in Lethbridge, November 11 to 13.

Registration brochures are now available at Alberta Agriculture district offices. The registration fee is $75.

The conference will address both general and very specific concerns regarding the economical production and marketing of crop alternatives available to producers for all regions of Alberta, says a conference organizer.

Blair Roth, a special crops specialist with the department in Lethbridge, says the conference will have a province-wide perspective. Based on the theme of crop diversification, it will include 10 commodity-specific workshops to assist farmers in ensuring they know what the alternatives are, or could be, suitable for their farming operations.

Keynote speakers will include Dick Dawson, vice-president, Cargill, Winnipeg and Dr. Jack Carter of North Dakota State University, discussing crop diversification and how it is affected by production, marketing and political realities.

An awareness session on production, economics, marketing, transport and processing will be held the afternoon of November 12. The conference will then become specific with a number of information/discussion sessions on the evening of November 12. Workshop sessions will be offered November 13.

The workshop sessions will examine the topics of corn/sorghum; traditional crops/non-traditional uses; new crops from wild rice to buckwheat, canary seed, etc., and more; vegetables/fruits/potatoes; warm season pulse crops; greenhouse/ornamentals/mushrooms; forages including double cropping, forage seed, hay marketing, preservatives and new grass species; herbs and spices; sunflowers/safflowers and cool season pulse crops.

(Cont'd)

The conference will be summarized by Dr. Gordon Dorrell, director of the Agriculture Canada Lethbridge Research Station and V.C. Prudek, president of the Pulse Grower's Association of Alberta.

Roth says the conference is intended to promote the theme of crop diversification on the farm and to look at the alternatives currently available and those with future potential.

For further information please contact Blair Roth (381-5127) or Tom Krahn (362-3391).

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Contact: Blair Roth
381-5127

AGRI-NEWS

September 28, 1987

For immediate release

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

September 28, 1987
For immediate release

Fall irrigate to leach salts from soil

Irrigating fields when there is no crop in the ground may not seem reasonable at first glance, but the fall season is an ideal time for irrigating saline land, says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"Freeing the seedbed and underlying soil of salts now by washing these salts downward will improve germination and subsequent yields next year," says Ron McMullin, soil and water specialist with the department in Lethbridge.

"Leaching salts further down in the soil by a fall irrigation can be a management tool for improving yields on both subsurface-drained land and undrained land. In areas of North America with long growing seasons, leaching is done in the spring before seeding. But because Alberta's shorter growing season reduces the opportunity for a pre-plant irrigation, fall irrigation is a good alternative."

Soil salts tend to be drawn into the upper part of the root zone by crop water use and evaporation. This process is much like the movement of a liquid to the top of a wick by capillary action.

Crops can use fairly salty groundwater which is drawn up into the root zone, but when the salts accumulate, soil salinity problems develop, says McMullin. This salt accumulation results in poor germination, death of tillers or stunted growth, and poor yields. To increase germination percentage and subsequent yields, the salts must be moved out of the seedbed and preferably out of the root zone.

The only way to do this is to leach the salts downward with extra water. When fall rainfall is minimal, that means a fall irrigation is in order.

"The farmer who has seen a crop die out of a salty patch soon after irrigation, knows that irrigating salty land can be a challenge," says McMullin. "Usually a shallow water table is found under the saline area and irrigating the salty spot will raise the water table substantially.

(Cont'd)

Fall irrigate to leach salts from soils (cont'd)

"The crop often yellows then dies out in this waterlogged situation or is stunted by the increased salt that the summer heat sucks to the surface. In the fall when no crop is grown, worries are fewer. No crop will die out due to rising water tables and cooler temperatures mean the salts will not be pulled back up by wick action. The closer the time of irrigation to freeze-up, the less salt will migrate upward before spring."

The specialist says with a five to six month drain-out period in winter, the water table will recede in most situations. Where water tables will not recede over winter to depths greater than 1.2 metres (4 feet), subsurface drainage will be necessary for any significant leaching to occur.

As a rule, a given depth of water will remove 60 to 80 per cent of the salt in an equivalent depth of soil. The sandier the land, the greater the salt removal.

For example, a 150 millimetre (6 inch) fall irrigation will leach about 80 per cent of the salts out of the top 150 millimetre (6 inches) of sandy soil or 60 per cent of the salt out of 150 millimetres of silty-clay soil. A portion of the salt below this depth will also be pushed downward.

"With a seedbed low in salt, crops will be off to a good start before salts again are brought to the surface," he says. "Cereals, which are particularly sensitive to salts after germination and through the fourth leaf stage, can become well established before upward salt migration occurs.

"Once established, most crops can withstand much higher salt levels. Fall irrigation can give a crop that chance next spring."

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Contact: Ron McMullin
381-5154

September 28, 1987
For immediate release

Land values continue downward trend

Fewer acres of Alberta farmland at lower prices were sold in the first half of 1987 compared to the same period last year, according to statistics recently compiled by Alberta Agriculture.

Figures for the first six months of 1987 are maintaining a trend over the last four years, says Julie Egglestone, a resource economist with the department in Edmonton who has just completed a second quarter report on the agriculture real estate situation.

The report shows the average value of an acre of farmland in Alberta at $352.65 at the end of June. This was down from $391.61 in June of 1986 and $447.37 at the end of June 1984.

The figures show 261,070 acres changed hands between April and June of this year, compared to 273,519 acres sold in the second half of 1986, and 355,566 acres sold in the second quarter of 1984.

"Since the second quarter of 1986, farmland value has decreased 9.9 per cent," says Egglestone. "This is consistent with the trend that seems to have started in 1985. The number of acres transferred in the second quarter has been decreasing since 1984. In 1987, transfer activity decreased 4.6 per cent."

Looking at average land prices in counties and municipal districts across the province, the report shows a more than $700 an acre difference between the highest and lowest prices.

The County of Lethbridge in southern Alberta had the highest average land value in the province at $793.04 per acre, while farmland in the most northern region, Improvement District 23 including the High Level and Fort Vermilion areas, averaged $73.93 per acre.

Sampling land prices from north to south, farmland in the County of Grande Prairie was valued at an average of $288.84 per acre, while in the County of Athabasca it was pegged at $190.30 per acre.

(Cont'd)

Land values continue downward trend (cont'd)

Farmland in the County of St. Paul was valued at $367.81 per acre; in the County of Camrose, $376.63; County of Red Deer, $606.80 an acre; Municipal District of Starland, around Drumheller was $379.73 an acre; the MD of Foothills, around High River, was $663.98 an acre; the County of Newell, including the Brooks area, was $329.16 per acre, and in the MD of Pincher Creek the average price of an acre of farmland was $447.79.

Of the 63 counties, municipal districts, improvement districts and special areas reported in the statistics, 16 had average prices ranging from $200 to $300; 13 had prices ranging from $300 to $400; nine had prices between $100 and $200; eight had prices between $400 and $500; seven had prices between $500 and $600; six had prices between $600 and $700; three had prices under $100; and only one, the County of Lethbridge, was over $700 per acre.

For more information on land values or a copy of the full report contact Julie Egglestone with the resource economics branch in Edmonton at 427-4026.

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Contact: Julie Egglestone
427-4026

September 28, 1987
For immediate release

Farm and family theme of Peace region conference

Women in the Peace River region interested in attending a two-day conference designed by farm women for farm women should reserve a couple days in mid-November.

"The Farm, The Family, The Future" is the theme of the Farm Women's Conference planned for November 19 and 20 at the Grande Prairie Inn in Grande Prairie.

Fern Richardson, Alberta Agriculture district home economist in Spirit River, says registration is limited to 250 women. Registration forms are now available at Alberta Agriculture district offices in the Peace region.

"There are a variety of contemporary topics on the program," says Richardson who is conference chairman. "These topics were suggested during planning meetings by farm women and are relevant to today's concerns."

Farm management topics such as product marketing, record keeping and estate planning will be on the agenda along with family and home issues such as parenting, marriage enrichment, creating a small business and designing a functional kitchen.

Speakers will also look at future needs and trends which will affect the farm and farm family.

The program is again being offered in a select-a-session format allowing delegates a chance to participate in discussions of most interest to them.

Conference keynote speaker is Donna Cookson-Martin of Sedgewick. Blind since birth, Cookson-Martin is a teacher, psychologist, wife and mother who will talk about her success and using adversity to enhance self-esteem.

Wrapping up the conference will be Bibi Laurie, of Grande Prairie Regional College using the theme "Jest for You" to talk about coping.

"We have a well-balanced program that provides something for all interests," says Richardson. "And we have also pianned a new entertainment feature that will follow the conference banquet."

(Cont'd)

Farm and family theme of Peace region conference (cont'd)

Organizers this year are looking for talent to be part of the "Homespun Review". All Peace region district home economists will join the program by making a contribution to the variety talent show.

"But we are also asking farm women participating in the conference to think about being part of the Homespun Review," she says. "If they sing, dance, play a musical instrument, do a comedy routine or want to perform a short skit they should let us know."

Richardson says a letter will be sent out with each registration explaining the details of participating in the show.

The cost of this year's conference is $20 which includes all sessions and lunch, or $35 which includes the conference sessions, lunch and the November 19 evening banquet.

Conference delegates registering before October 9 will be elegible for the early bird draw. Final deadline for registration is November 13.

For more information on the conference contact any district home economist.

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Contact: Fern Richardson
864-3597

September 28, 1987
For immediate release

Deadline for claims extended to October 30, 1987

Anticipating that the fall harvest may keep farmers away from their paperwork, the deadline for submitting claims under the former Alberta Feed Grain Market Adjustment Program has been extended.

Shelia Devereux, program agrologist in Edmonton, says producers wanting to submit farm fed claims now have until October 30, 1987 to apply. Deadline had earlier been announced for the end of September.

"All claims must be received and signed at an Alberta Agriculture district office on or before October 30," she says.

The program allows a benefit of $21 per tonne on home-grown feed grain which was fed to livestock before June 30, 1987.

Producers should note that claims must be submitted on personalized claim forms. Also, final claims cannot be approved if claimants have not submitted 1986-87 registration updates and also returned all unused $21 "A" certificates.

The Alberta Feed Grain Market Adjustment Program was replaced by the Alberta Crow Benefit Offset Program on July 1, 1987. "The objective of the new program - offsetting the Crow benefit which is paid to the railways - remains the same," says Devereux. "The level of benefit on feed grain fed to livestock after June 30, 1987 is $13 per tonne."

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Contact: Sheila Devereux
422-0015

September 28, 1987
For immediate release

User fees announced for vet lab services

Alberta Agriculture will begin charging for services provided by its provincial veterinary labs October 1.

In an attempt to cut costs and make the operation of the four diagnostic labs more efficient, the department will charge users a flat fee for tests performed by its pathology branch on poultry and livestock specimens and carcasses.

The animal health laboratory system, established in 1947, includes the main lab in Edmonton and three regional labs, in Fairview, Airdrie and Lethbridge.

Over the past 40 years the system has provided a free animal disease diagnostic service to livestock producers, veterinarians and other institutions, determining the cause of sickness or death in livestock and poultry.

In 1984 a user fee for laboratory work performed on pet animals was instituted. The recent announcement extends this fee to all laboratory services offered by the animal health laboratories.

Alberta is the last provincial government veterinary laboratory service to announce a user fee. Saskatchewan earlier announced it would collect a fee for similar services also beginning October 1.

Alberta's fee schedule is set at $20 for a postmortem examination on each submission of an animal, or poultry from flocks of 100 or more birds. A $15 fee will be charged for submissions of portions of animals or birds forwarded for laboratory examination.

A $50 fee will be charged for postmortem examination of animals for legal and insurance purposes, and $10 will be charged for submission of birds from farm flocks of less than 100 birds.

A user fee will also be charged for other samples such as serum, urine and milk samples which may be sent for laboratory testing.

(Cont'd)

User fees announced for vet lab services (cont'd)

There is no change in the fee schedule for examination of pet animals. Owners will be charged $40 for examination of an entire animal and $25 for portions or tumors.

According to an Alberta Agriculture release the user fee is expected to result "in a more effective use of the resources and personnel at the animal health division by reducing non-essential submissions. It is also expected that there will be development of private sector alternatives to government laboratory services, especially in the areas of serology and bacteriology."

For more information on the user fees contact Dr. Nick Nation, head of the pathology branch, in Edmonton at 436-8903.

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Contact: Nick Nation
436-8903

September 28, 1987
For immediate release

Joint convention planned for horticulture industry

Three of Alberta's leading horticultural industries are planning a joint convention and trade show November 12 to 14 in Red Deer.

The Alberta Greenhouse Growers Association (AGGA), Alberta Market Gardeners Association (AMGA), and the Alberta Fresh Vegetable Marketing Board (AFVMB) have combined efforts to bring in speakers from eastern and central Canada, the United States and across Alberta.

The program offers registrants a choice of seminars including talks on water quality, pest identification, soil analysis, tomato production, getting a start in the fruit industry, cole crops, Saskatoon berry production and new and alternate crops. The seminars will run simultaneously all day Friday and Saturday morning.

The three producer organizations will be holding their annual or general meetings during the convention.

An evening banquet and fun casino are planned for November 13, with a wind-up banquet and dance planned for the evening of November 14.

As many as 50 exhibitors are expected to participate in the trade show. This will be the first time this number and variety of horticultural trades people will be under one roof in Alberta. The trade show opens November 12 and continues to November 14.

Greenhouse tours visiting three local producers are offered on the afternoon of November 14.

The convention and trade show will be held at the Capri Centre in Red Deer. The hotel has been reserved for the event. For more information contact Dave Gourlay (AGGA), 387-4285, Wayne Doan (AMGA), Sharon Chmielewski (AFVMB), 327-0447, Lloyd Hausher, 362-3391.

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Contact: Lloyd Hausher
362-3391

September 28, 1987
For immediate release

Report card expected at November irrigation conference

Those who use and manage Alberta's multi-million dollar irrigation industry will be meeting in Lethbridge in mid-November for a one-day conference that may provide an economic report card on the industry.

The Alberta Irrigation Projects Association which represents all irrigation projects in the province hopes to get a progress report on a study of the value of irrigation system rehabilitation programs.

Conference chairman, Gordon Zobell, of Raymond says the association is confident the independent study being conducted by consultants Coopers and Lybrand Limited and CH2M Hill will be positive.

"We know that the millions of dollars that have been spent on rehabilitating and upgrading the irrigation storage and delivery system in Alberta is of sound economic value," he says. "But it will be of interest to see an independent report that will hopefully confirm what we have known for years."

The November 16 conference at the Lethbridge Lodge is geared for Alberta farmers who grow about 20 per cent of the province's crop production value on the more than 1.5 million acres of farmland under irrigation.

Also participating in the event will be directors and managers of the 13 irrigation district boards. The conference is expected to attract up to 250 delegates to the working sessions with as many as 400 people attending the evening banquet.

The irrigation projects association is headed by Roy Jensen of Shaughnessy, who is also chairman of the Lethbridge Northern Irrigation District.

Zobell says the conference theme is "Operation and Maintenance of Irrigation Conveyance in Southern Alberta".

Several Alberta speakers are slated to give talks at the convention. Keynote speaker is Jerry Schaak, of Denver, an engineer with the United States Bureau of Reclamation who will discuss his experiences during 25 years of operating and maintaining irrigation systems.

(Cont'd)

Report card expected at November irrigation conference (cont'd)

Also slated to address the meeting is Dr. David Manz, of the University of Calgary; Steve Topping of the Bow River Irrigation District, Gerhardt Hartman, of the irrigation secretariat; Jim Brown, manager of the St. Mary River Irrigation District; Doug Clark of Alberta Environment and Svat Jonas of Alberta Agriculture.

Their talks will be based on maintaining and operating irrigation systems and new technology affecting the industry. There will also be a panel discussion of district water supervisors representing both large and small irrigation districts.

Zobell says the convention hopes to have Taber/Warner MLA Bob Bogle as guest speaker at the noon luncheon. Senator Herb Sparrow is scheduled to be the guest speaker at the evening banquet.

For more information on the conference or to register, contact Diane Verostek at the Alberta Irrigation Project Association office in Vauxhall at 654-4150.

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Contact: Gordon Zobell
752-3511

Agri-News Briefs

GAME RANCHING TO BE DISCUSSED IN RED DEER

Farmers and other landowners interested in the game ranching industry should plan to attend a three-day conference in Red Deer in October. The Alberta Game Grower's Association fall convention will provide an opportunity to meet those involved in the industry and get an overview of the status and future of game ranching in the province. Nearly 20 industry specialists are scheduled to address the October 22 to 24 conference. Dr. Lyle Renecker, president of the association will lead off discussion on the status and scale of game ranching. As well there will be speakers on wapiti, fallow deer, bison and moose farming. Speakers will also deal with slaughter and meat processing, marketing, animal health, velvet production, investment and taxation, and reproduction and genetics. The convention to be held at the North Hill Inn in Red Deer is open to members and non-members of the association. For more information contact Dr. Lyle Renecker at the Department of Animal Science at the University of Alberta in Edmonton.

NEW PUBLICATIONS DIRECTORY RELEASED

The most current directory of publications available from Alberta Agriculture has just been released. The 37-page booklet lists 1,176 titles of publications which are available to farmers and the general public on topics covering almost every aspect of crop and livestock production and agricultural economics. The book is divided into 11 categories and lists publications covering field crops, horticulture, livestock, soils, insects, diseases and pests, agricultural engineering, agricultural economics, home economics and student publications. For a copy of the Publications List (Agdex 001), contact Alberta Agriculture Publications Office, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

(Cont'd)

HOOF TRIMMING COURSE AT OLDS

Livestock owners who have dealt with foot problems in their cattle should participate in a three-day course offered at Olds College in November. The November 2 to 5 program will introduce cattlemen to the basics of hoof trimming and foot care for their cattle. They will learn the need for hoof trimming as well as the anatomy and physiology of feet and legs. The session also teaches selection and preparation of hoof nippers and how to handle cattle with and without a trimming table. Participants should bring their own coveralls and hoof nippers to the course. To register for the $60 course contact the college at 556-8344. Registration deadline is October 23. A similar course will be offered next April.

GUIDE OFFERS ADVICE ON VEGETABLE STORAGE

Temperature has the greatest influence on the storability of vegetables, say Alberta Agriculture specialists. The ideal temperature will control respiration, disease and sprouting, yielding the best quality produce over a long storage period. Along with temperature, compatibility is another factor to consider. Certain vegetables and fruits should not be stored together because of differing storage requirements, such as temperature and humidity. Squash cannot be stored with root crops because it requires a higher temperature and lower humidity. As well taste can be affected. Apples and pears produce ethylene which causes carrots to become bitter if they stored together for a period of time. Vegetables such as beets, cabbages, carrots, parsnips, radishes and turnips do best in a cold and humid environment of about 1 degree Celsius and humidity of about 95 per cent. Table potatoes like it cool and humid at about 5 to 7 degrees Celsius and 90 to 95 per cent humidity. Squash, marrow and pumpkins prefer it cool and dry, at about 10 to 12 degrees Celsius and 70 to 75 per cent humidity. Cured onions prefer it cold and dry at about 0 to 3 degrees Celsius and 70 to 75 per cent humidity. For more information on vegetable storage write for a copy of Alberta Agriculture's Vegetable Home Storage booklet (Agdex 732-15) from the Publications Office, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

AGRI-NEWS

October 5, 1987

For immediate release

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

October 5, 1987
For immediate release

Alberta companies receive export awards

Five Alberta companies involved in the export of agriculture products and services were among 15 firms recently honored by the provincial government for their efforts in reaching foreign markets.

Western Breeders Group of Balzac, Alberta Wheat Pool of Calgary, Centennial Packers Ltd./X.L. Food Systems Ltd. of Calgary (in a joint venture) and Canada West Trading Corporation of Edmonton recieved their awards from Agriculture Minister Peter Elzinga at a recent dinner in Edmonton.

They were winners in categories of the Export Achievement Awards for 1986 which are presented annually as a kick-off to Export Month.

The awards are sponsored jointly by Alberta Agriculture and the Alberta Department of Economic Development and Trade. Along with agriculture, all types of Alberta consumer and industrial goods and services are eligible to compete for the honor.

The winners were announced at a banquet in Edmonton, October 1, hosted by Mr. Elzinga and Larry Shaben, minister of economic development and trade.

Western Breeders, a company internationally known for its work in livestock genetics, was honored for increasing sales of bovine semen and embryos by 131 per cent over the past four years.

A winner for export results in the manufacturers' (1-50 employee) category, the company has focused on the export market.

Western Breeders "have shifted their concentration toward new products and new markets," says Brenda Lennox, an Alberta Agriculture research officer with the market development branch. "This includes sale of frozen beef embryos to Australia and the USSR. The USSR project is in operation under a 10 year protocol signed with the Russian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic and is the first to be completed with a western country by the RSFSR."

Under new markets for manufacturers with 50 employees or more, Alberta Wheat Pool won the award for developing a new grain variety for Japan.

(Cont'd)

"Alberta Wheat Pool made new market penetration into the Pacific Rim for 1986, " says Lennox. "In Japan, competing against a US variety called 'Rymin', Alberta Wheat Pool sold 'Kodiak' rye which has principally replaced seven competitive US varieties in rice-paddy and upland fodder production. Japan also saw the introduction of 'Foothill' oats, which replaced another US variety called 'Haylander'."

In the export marketing division of the manufacturers' category, two companies, Centennial Packers Ltd. and X.L. Food Systems Ltd. were honored for their joint venture marketing efforts.

The two represent "the only organization in Canada to have both a slaughtering and a processing facility approved by the European Economic Community," says Lennox. "...the joint venture companies are taking advantage of this enviable position to increase sales of beef and fancy meats to the European market."

The joint venture has also been recognized as having an understanding and dedication to the Japanese market, and for making gains in both the US and Hong Kong markets.

Canada West Trading Corporation of Edmonton was honored for its efforts in marketing Alberta food products.

"Providing export services for all varieties of Alberta agri-food products, Canada West achieved 1986 export and total sales of over $37 million, a 19 per cent increase over 1985," says the research officer. "Opening a new market in Japan, Canada West in co-operation with Alberta Agriculture and Alberta Cattle Commission has established an Alberta beef logo in Japanese that is used to easily identify such products."

The company is best known for its "Taste of Canada" promotion.

All five of the companies have received export achievement awards in the past.

Major awards this year included the International Marketing Award to Westronic Inc. of Calgary and the International Marketing "Firm of the Year" award to Nowsco Well Service Ltd. of Calgary.

(Cont'd)

Alberta companies receive export awards (cont'd)

Also honored for their achievements were Trimeg Holdings Ltd. of Calgary, D.B. Robinson and Associates Ltd. of Edmonton, Keyword Office Technologies Ltd. of Calgary, Smed Manufacturing Inc. of Calgary, Idacom Electronics Ltd. of Edmonton, Intera Technologies Ltd. of Calgary, Hyprotech Ltd. of Calgary, and Peter Bawden Drilling Ltd. of Calgary.

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Contact: Brenda Lennox
427-4241

October 5, 1987
For immediate release

4-H members share over $28,0000 in scholarships

About three dozen young Albertans will be sharing more than $28,000 in scholarships this year to be used toward furthering their education.

Most of the 38 recipients, all past or present members of 4-H clubs around the province, have been selected by a panel of four judges from a field of nearly 200 applications.

Announcement of winners of remaining scholarships will be made later.

The scholarships made possible by private industry, associations and individuals, range from $100 to $3,000. The money is to be used to cover part of the education costs at colleges and universities.

Selection committee co-ordinator, Andy McDonald, said recipients were picked according to several criteria, including involvement in 4-H, school, community and other organizations. Points were also given for a candidate's length of involvement in 4-H and for executive offices held.

Shane Bateman of Calgary, Tracy Pfannmuller of Mayerthorpe and Jake Burlet of Cherhill were major winners in this round, each receiving $1,000 awards.

Bateman, a member of the Jumping Pound Beef Club received the award sponsored by the Canadian National Exhibition. He will be attending the University of Saskatchewan school of veterinary medicine.

Pfannmuller, a member of the Lobstick Beef and Lobstick Clothing 4-H Clubs at Mayerthorpe received the Petro Canada 4-H Youth Leadership Award. She will be using the money toward her bachelor of education degree at the Univeristy of Alberta.

Burlet, a member of the Cherhill Beef 4-H club will use the Tx Bar ranch scholarship to assist with veterinary medicine studies at the University of Saskatchewan.

David Trautman of New Norway, a member of the Bashaw dairy club will use his $800 award from Lilydale Co-operative toward an agriculture degree from the University of Alberta.

(Cont'd)

4-H members share over $28,000 in scholarships (cont'd)

Seven young Albertans will each receive $600 scholarships from the Wheat Board Surplus Monies Trust fund. Arron Madson of Sundre, Marcia Breitkreuz of Onoway, Tamara Simon of Bow Island, Keith Lemay of Grande Prairie, Shannon Gordeyko of Ohaton, Sherry Roth of Heisler and Daryl Schott of Two Hills will share the $4,200 award.

Other scholarship winners and sponsors include the following:

$500 Awards
Charlene Schultz, Bashaw - United Grain Growers Ltd.
Tammi Van Tighen, Carstairs - World of Beef and Feedlot Management
Lisa Pavka, Cranford - TX Bar ranch
Marie Hoar, Innisfail - Norma Jean Gray memorial award
Cathy MacFarlane, Medicine Hat - Norma Jean Gray memorial award
Jean Malcolm, Hines Creek - Thomas Caryk memorial award
Dallas Mueller, Lacombe - Hoechst Canada Bursary

$400 Awards
Lori Roessler, Hines Creek - Edith Taylor Memorial Award
Jolene Hart, Medicine Hat - Tx Bar ranch

$300 Awards
Valerie Differenz, Bruderheim - Alberta Wheat Pool - first year
Laura Mappin, Byemoor - Alberta Wheat Pool - first year
Tracy Hueppelsheuser, Blackfalds - Alberta Wheal Pool - second year
Cindy Trigg, Edmonton - Alberta Wheat Pool - second year
Lisa Shuttleworth, Rolling Hills - Inga Marr Memorial award

$200 Awards
Penny MacGillivary, Red Deer - Farm Credit Corporation award

$100 Awards
Kelly Knox, Fallis - Farmhouse International Fraternity
Patricia Kirylchuk, Lac La Biche - Ceres International Fraternity

For more information on 4-H scholarships contact Anita Styba with the Alberta Agriculture 4-H Branch in Edmonton, 422-4H4H.

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Contact: Anita Styba
422-4444

October 5, 1987
For immediate release

Producers urged to attend sheep symposium

Several international speakers will be making presentations to Alberta sheep producers at the 1987 Alberta Sheep Symposium in Banff in November.

Experts from England and the United States, as well as Ontario, British Columbia and Alberta will cover a wide range of topics including reproductive performance, economics, breeding programs, lamb gains, flock health, and consumer and market trends.

Registration forms are now going out for the November 19 - 21 conference, at the Banff Springs Hotel. Anyone not receiving a registration form by mid-October can obtain a copy from any Alberta Agriculture district office. The completed form and registration money can also be returned to the DA office for courier delivery to the department's regional headquarters in Airdrie. Registration deadline is November 1.

Cathy Gallivan, Alberta Agriculture sheep specialist in Airdrie says the symposium will provide producers with an opportunity to discuss some of the latest advances and challenges facing the industry, as well as a chance to meet colleagues from across Alberta.

Following registration at the hotel November 19, the symposium gets underway November 20. Speakers include Dr. Michael Tempest of Shropshire, U.K.; Dr. David Thomas of the University of Illinois; Dr. Robert Jordan of the University of Minnesota; and Dr. Don Bailey of Oregon,

Dr. Steven Morgan Jones of the Agriculture Canada research station at Lacombe will discuss the improved carcass grading standards, while Dr. Anne McClelland of the Lethbridge Research Station will give an overview of the sheep industry in New Zealand.

Dr. Charles Parker, of the University of Idaho will talk about current sheep research and its practical application for producers.

Weaving workshops will also be offered during the symposium.

For more information on the symposium contact any Alberta Agriculture district office or Cathy Gallivan at Airdrie at 948-8517.

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Contact: Cathy Gallivan
948-8517

October 5, 1987
For immediate release

Community groups can be more effective

Dull meetings, a tried membership and foggy objectives are three of the most common problems affecting the operation of community organizations, says an Alberta Agriculture spokesman.

That's not to say every camera club and community hall board in the country should be run with the formality of the house of commons, but a few basic adjustments in conduct and attitude may help breath new life into any group facing the organizational blues.

Fern Richardson, district home economist in Spirit River, says she has talked to many groups interested in beginning or revitalizing an association or community service group.

"Every group is a little bit different, but there are three common problem areas," she says. "Problems may stem from the way meetings are conducted, they may have trouble attracting and keeping new members, or they may simply have difficulty in defining the objectives and purpose of the organization."

The district home economist, who provides a workshop on "Your Community Group - How To Make It Work", says a local organization doesn't have to sacrifice its friendly and relaxed atmosphere to make its operation more efficient and successful.

"Whether it's a local camera club, an agricultural society, community hall board, or an agricultural service board the same problems can apply," she says. "Members are often concerned that if something isn't done the group will fold. Maybe they are interested in a new look."

Richardson says because problems can be closely related the organization has to review its overall operation.

The workshop leader says it's important to keep meetings tight and on target. She says new members should be encouraged and given an opportunity to try new ideas. Spread the work around using sub-committees so a few people don't become overloaded. And make sure the organization has clear objectives. If the group has outlived it's usefullness don't be afraid to shut it down.

(Cont'd)

Community groups can be more effective (cont'd)

"There's nothing worse for people than a meeting that goes on and on and doesn't seem to accomplish anything," she says. "You don't have to have a parliamentary rules book in front of you, but a few guidelines will help streamline the meeting and make it more interesting and more productive.

She says the chairman should have a written agenda and stick to it. Socializing should be done at the coffee break or after the meeting. Motions should be made, seconded and then discussed. The majority should rule, but the minority should also have a chance to speak. All members have a responsibility to keep the meeting on track. It is important to pick both starting and adjournment times and stick to them.

"Running a good meeting is one of the key points in keeping membership," she says. "But the purpose of the organization should be clear so that prospective members know what they are getting involved in."

To avoid a work overload, the home economist says new members should not immediately be placed on the executive. She recommends they serve an apprenticeship before responsibility is laid at their doorstep. Create sub-committees so that planning work is spread around and more people are kept involved. Review meeting times and location. Can something be done to make meetings more convenient for members?

"As far as the organization itself is concerned, make sure its objectives are clear," says Richardson. "Maybe the group was formed years ago. Have the objectives changed? It is still meeting original needs?"

Richardson says the group shouldn't be afraid to ask "do we really need to exist?" If the answer is yes, then an action plan should be developed to set the course for the future.

The home economist says films are available which also help groups evaluate their effectiveness. For more information on improving the operation of a community association contact any Alberta Agriculture district home economist, or Fern Richardson in Spirit River at 864-3597.

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Contact: Fern Richardson
864-3597

Editor's Note

The attached article is a follow up to an announcement on the video resource library system created by Alberta Agriculture earlier this year.

While it is of general interest to farmers in Alberta the article specifically refers to the communities of:

Brooks
Olds
Sedgewick
Lacombe
Lamont
St. Paul
Barrhead
Athabasca
Grande Prairie
Fairview

For more information on the system contact the nearest participating office.

Alberta Agriculture, Print Media Branch, Phone: (403) 427-2121

October 5, 1987
For immediate release

Video library system proves popular

Alberta farm families are making good use of a new video library system created earlier this year by Alberta Agriculture.

Spokesmen for several of the district offices participating in the pilot project, say there has been steady use of production and farm management information available on VCR home videos.

Titles such as adjusting the combine and shock chlorination of wells aren't likely to make the top 10 list at the local video rental store, but district offices report this is the kind of information farmers are after.

The video library system was launched in 10 Alberta Agriculture district offices in a June announcement by Agriculture Minister Peter Elzinga.

The idea was to make the production and management information videos produced by the broadcast media branch more accessible to farmers.

Each of the 10 district offices have about 40 VHS tapes on a range of subjects. These are just a sampling of the hundreds of titles available from the department.

While video loan figures are encouraging, the actual number of people viewing the videos may be much higher. Evaluation figures show, as an example, production information videos have been viewed two to four times by as many as six people.

In Fairview, Nora Paulovich, district agriculturist says she is pleased with the interest from farmers.

"There has been good response so far, and as more people become aware of the service use will increase," she says.

Paulovich says videos most popular at this time of year in her area deal with crop production and marketing, livestock management, corral construction and horse training.

The Fairview office has also included several locally produced video tapes of meetings and seminars in its library. The DA says these are useful to farmers who can't attend the actual event.

(Cont'd)

Fairview office clerk Karen Friedel, left, checks one of the tapes in the district's video library with Nan Bartlett, regional resource management specialist.

In Athabasca, Vera Overwater says once the word got out to producers, use of the video library has been steady.

"It's going over very well," she says. "Some farmers will take out several at a time. Some of the more popular subjects include shock chlorination of wells, preconditioning calves, cattle management films, and wills and estate planning.

Sharon Boorse at the St. Paul district office estimates that office loans three to four tapes a week to farmers.

"We've had good response," she says. "Some farmers come in regularly and are going through the tapes on a rotation basis looking at everything available."

(Cont'd)

Video library system proves popular (Cont'd)

Boorse says shock chlorinating the well and adjusting the combine have been popular, and predicted the interest in subject matter will change with the agricultural season.

Sedgewick district home economist, Ellen Frombach, says her office is "very pleased" with response to the video library.

"And once harvest is over I think we will see even more interest from producers," she says.

Popular videos loaned at the Sedgewick office include cattle production information, forward contracting, design for living, horse training, dealing with farm stress, the rural boardroom and estate planning.

Pasture management and canola production videos are two of the popular videos on loan at the district office in Olds.

Debbie Backer says their office has also had good response from producers.

"Most people take the videos home over a weekend or for a few days," she says. "Along with pasture and canola production information, design for living and farm estate planning have been two other videos in demand here."

In Brooks, district home economist Elvira Smid says producers review the video catalogue available in that office and select subjects of interest.

"Interest in some videos is probably seasonal, but the most popular ones in our area deal with horse training," she says. "We have even had a waiting list. Following close are videos on pasture management, sheep health problems and pressure canning."

Smid expects farm management videos will be more popular in winter when the farm pace slows.

District offices participating in the video library system include Brooks, Olds, Sedgewick, Lacombe, Lamont, St. Paul, Barrhead, Athabasca, Grande Prairie and Fairview.

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Contact: Broadcast Media Branch
427-2127

October 5, 1987
For immediate release

Agrologists warn against untested soil amendments

With an increasing variety of soil amendments on the market, claiming to substantially improve productivity, farmers are urged to be cautious.

The Alberta Institute of Agrologists (AIA), the professional organization of Alberta agriculturists, urges farmers to be certain that such products have been scientifically tested and proven before using them.

Over 25 soil supplements are being promoted, says the association. Some claim to dramatically reduce the need for fertilizers. Others reportedly enhance the reclamation of problem soils. Most are marketed as one of three basic groups: enzymes and hormones; soil and seed inoculants; and amendments for saline soils.

"Farmers are cautioned to be skeptical of any product that makes claims of substantial improvement in soil and crop productivity, but lacks standard research documentation," says an AIA release. "The Alberta Institute of Agrologists advises that questions about soil amendments should be referred to qualified personnel. Professionals employed by Alberta or Canada Agriculture are often a good direct source of such information."

Questions can also be referred to the nearest AIA branch.

Farmers wanting to test a product themselves should do it on a limited scale, says the institute. An untreated check strip should be left adjacent to the treated area and careful comparisons of crop growth and yield should be made.

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Contact: Brook Harker
President, Lethbridge Branch AIA
381-5516

October 5, 1987
For immediate release

Bull test station to open in Fairview

Cattlemen in the Peace River region will soon have a new yardstick for buying local breeding stock with the opening of the region's first all-breeds bull test station this fall.

Some 100 head of purebred bull calves, representing most of the major beef breeds, will be arriving at the new facility at Fairview College later this month.

Next spring, at the end of the 140-day test station program the stock will be offered for sale, complete with performance records.

The Fairview College Bull Test Station is a joint venture developed in co-operation with Peace region purebred beef breeders, the college and Alberta Agriculture.

Although located on the college grounds in Fairview, the station will be operated by an association of breeders.

"This will be an excellent service for beef breeders and commercial cattlemen in the region", says Trevor Jones, Alberta Agriculture's regional livestock specialist.

"Until now there haven't been commercial test facilities in the region. Breeders either took bulls to test stations outside the region or they didn't have them tested. And buyers either had to buy tested bulls elsewhere in the province, or they didn't worry about performance ratings."

Jones says the station will provide breeders in the region a chance to measure and compare breeding stock. As well the station will provide an opportunity to market tested bulls. For cattlemen the test station will reduce the guess work in selecting top performing animals to improve herd quality.

The regional specialist has been working on the project with beef breeders for four years. He says a survey showed there was industry support for the facility. It was decided Fairview was the best location for the service, since the college facilities were ideally suited, and the board of governors was supportive.

(Cont'd)

Fairview bull test station will be ready for late October opening

Harvey McLachlan and John Milne of Fairview College, say the $45,000 station can be expanded if needed. Built with some assistance from the Horned Cattle Trust Fund, the station involved the renovation and extension of a section of the livestock holding facilities at the college to create five pens.

Each pen is designed to hold 20 bulls. One end of the facility is covered to provide shelter for the animals, while "U" shaped feed bunks with cement flooring, were built at the other end.

"The animals will be brought in and given about 20 days to get used to the new environment and each other, before the official weight-in and test period begins," says McLachlan, co-ordinator of Fairview's ag diploma program.

(Cont'd)

Bull test station to open in Fairview (cont'd)

He says because the test station is operated by the association, it won't be part of the college program. However, the students will be exposed to the facility and have access to performance information.

Milne, college farm manager, says there has been strong interest in the testing facility. For the first season, he says the association took nominations and set a limit to accept up to five bulls from any one breeder.

There will be 30 Peace region breeders providing the first batch of bulls this fall. The association will be hiring a test station manager to feed the livestock, maintain animal health and keep records. The bulls will be weighed every 28 days.

"The breeders will be free to remove or sell bulls at anytime during the program if they wish," says Milne. "But it is planned that a sale day, for the top indexing animals, will be held here at the end of the testing program in late April."

Steve Pawluk, vice-president of academic studies, says the test station should provide a boost to the beef industry in the region. He says it represents a co-operative effort between all parties and the college appreciates the grant from the horned cattle trust fund which helped create a top-notch facility.

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Contact: Trevor Jones Fairview College
835-2291 835-6644 or 835-6600

Agri-News Briefs

OUTSTANDING YOUNG FARMERS SPEAK OUT

Hanna area farmer Norman Storch, will be among eight farmers from across Canada who will express their views on the future of agriculture during a session of the Outstanding Young Farmers' Program to be held at the Calgary Convention Centre in October. Storch, a poultry, cattle and grain producer will be joined by other regional finalists in the competition representing BC, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec and Nova Scotia. The discussion entitled "Top Farmers Speak Out" to be held at 10 a.m. October 22, will be followed by a Chamber of Commerce Luncheon. Along with Storch, speakers include Ted Ritchie of Naramata, B.C., Brett Meinert of Shaunavon, Saskatchewan, Leo Memers of Haywood, Manitoba, Gordon Forth of Lynden, Ontario, Arnie Hakvoort of Finch, Ontario, William Bryson of Ormstown, Quebec and Bruce Rand of Canning, Nova Scotia. For more information on the program sponsored by Hoechst Canada Inc. contact Bruce Lee at 934-4866 in Calgary.

DATES ADDED TO SALE LIST

Three more dates have been added to list of preconditioned calf sales to be held in Alberta this fall. The Calgary Public Livestock Market has scheduled two more sales, one for November 19 and the other for December 3, both beginning at 12 noon. Wainwright Livestock Exchange is also planning a preconditioned calf sale for December 9 at 11 a.m. Jackie Whittaker, of Alberta Agriculture in Edmonton, says if any one is aware of other preconditioned sales that have not been previously noted to contact her office at 436-9345. As of September 29, 22 preconditioned calf sales are planned this year.

REGISTER EARLY FOR FARM WOMEN'S CONFERENCE

Registration forms are now available for the annual Peace region Farm Women's Conference to be held November 19 and 20 in Grande Prairie. Forms are available at the offices of all Peace region district home economists. The early bird registration draw is October 9. Final registration deadline is November 1.

(Cont'd)

ALTERNATES CROPS CONFERENCE PLANNED

Farmers interested in opportunities offered by producing alternative crops should plan to attend a three-day conference in Lethbridge. Sponsored by Alberta Agriculture and the Pulse Growers Association of Alberta, the November 11 to 13 conference will offer discussion and workshops on the range of crops available as well as review production aspects, economics, marketing, transportation and processing. Registration forms are available from all Alberta Agriculture district offices. The fee is $75. For more information contact Blair Roth at 381-5127 in Lethbridge or Tom Krahn at 362-3391 in Brooks.

YOLK PROVIDES A CLUE

You can tell what a chicken eats by the color of its egg yolk, says the Canadian Egg Marketing Agency. A dark yellow-orange yolk means the chicken is a corneater. A pale yolk means it eats wheat.

MILK PRODUCTION COST REPORT AVAILABLE

If you wonder what it costs farmers to produce milk, the latest production figures are now available in an updated Alberta Agriculture publication. "The Economics of Milk Production in Alberta for 1986" has just been released by the department's production and resource economics branch. The 48-page booklet, which has been produced since World War II, provides an authoritative review of production costs for the past year. It is prepared annually from the farm records of several fluid milk producers who voluntarily participate in the project. Dr. Carlyle Ross, head of the branch says the 1986 cost of producing fluid milk dropped by 7.8 per cent from 1985. The decline was mainly attributed to falling feed prices. Declining feed costs, combined with short-term government drought assistance, improved net returns to producers. Return to equity rose to 16.5 per cent from 12.9 per cent. For a detailed copy of the report (Agdex 821-1) write to the Publications Office, Alberta Agriculture, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, AB, T6H 5T6.

(Cont'd)

TO INCORPORATE OR NOT TO INCORPORATE...

Alberta farm families wondering about the value of incorporation should obtain a copy of a newly revised Alberta Agriculture publication called Farm Business Incorporation. Prepared by the farm business management branch the 29-page booklet provides the reader with a basic understanding of farm corporations. Various capital structures, distribution of profits and losses, factors to consider with respect to farm incorporation, and the income tax and estate planning features of a company are discussed. A case study entitled "Alberta Farms Ltd." is presented to tie together the concepts presented in the publication. The example provides an overview of personal and business considerations and procedures involved in establishing a farm company. For a copy of the publication (Agdex 817-4), write The Publications Office, Alberta Agriculture, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

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AGRI-NEWS

October 12, 1987

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For immediate release

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

October 12, 1987
For immediate release

Asia trade mission will offer long-term benefits

Agriculture Minister Peter Elzinga says Alberta farmers and food processors will stand to reap long-term benefits from his trade mission to four Asian countries this month.

The minister states, "This mission is intended to lay the ground work for further expansion of the export of Alberta agriculture products to these countries.

"The impact of what we achieve will be felt over the next months and years. We will see results in increased export of several commodities from beef and canola, to forages, dairy genetics and processed foods."

The minister made his comments just before leaving last week for an 18 day visit to Korea, Japan, China and Hong Kong. Mr. Elzinga is part of a major provincial government mission, involving three other provincial ministers, into the Asia-Pacific region. This mission is being made during Canada Export Trade Month.

Mr. Elzinga's role in the mission will involve more than 30 meetings with Asian agricultural officials and tours of farms, food processing and food retail facilities.

The minister states, "Exports to these countries represent about one third of the total export of Alberta agriculture products. Japan, which is our second largest market, following close behind the United States, has great interest in our canola seed and Alberta beef.

"Korea has demonstrated an interest in our forage crops, while the People's Republic of China has identified dairy genetics, forages and livestock management as important areas. Hong Kong has interest in our processed foods including beef and pork products."

Many countries are interested in capturing a share of the huge market that exists in the Pacific Rim nations, says the minister. He says Alberta is facing keen competition and "holding its own" against other major trading countries.

(Cont'd)

Asia trade mission will offer long-term benefits (cont'd)

Mr. Elzinga says, "Alberta producers and food processors have proven they are price competitive with other countries, and we are known as leaders in producing quality agricultural products."

As an example, he says market research helped Alberta food processors develop packaging that meets the "extremely high standards" set by Japanese consumers.

The minister states, "It is this attention to detail and quality that is earning Alberta a place in this competitive market."

He says it will be important after the mission to follow-up on the relationships and contacts made to increase export sales.

Mr. Elzinga launched his tour in South Korea visiting the National Livestock Experimental Station at Suweon and meeting officials. Later he was to meet with Korea's assistant minister of Agriculture Fisheries and Forestries.

During visits to Tokyo and Osaka, Japan he is expected to meet with both the directors general of the food agency and livestock bureau, visit retail outlets, an Alberta beef demonstration, and meet with industry and trade officials.

In the People's Republic of China Mr. Elzinga will arrive in Beijing for meetings with the minister of agriculture, animal husbandry and fisheries and travel to Harbin for talks with the governor of the province of Heilongjiang.

Again he will meet with industry officials, and tour farms and Alberta Agriculture projects in China, before moving on to Hong Kong.

During his two-day visit to the British colony he will meet with the Alberta Office agent general and participate in an Alberta beef promotion.

Also participating in the Asia trade mission are Economic Development and Trade Minister, Larry Shaben; Forestry, Lands and Wildlife Minister, LeRoy Fjordbotten; and Career Development and Employment Minister, Rick Orman.

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Contact: Dennis Glover
427-4241

October 12, 1987
For immediate release

Hay auction planned for October 24

More than 2,000 tonnes of hay are expected to be on the auction bloc later this month at the Lakeland Forage Association second annual hay auction at the Bonnyville Auction Mart.

Buyers from across the province are encouraged to participate in the October 24 "English" style action, which will offer a wide selection of hay type and quality.

Harvey Yoder, Alberta Agriculture district agriculturist in Lac La Biche, says buyers will find hay to suit all classes of livestock including beef, dairy and horse operations.

The only auction of its kind in Alberta, all hay will come with a feed analysis, so buyers can see the quality of the product offered.

A description of each lot and feed analysis will be listed in a sale catalogue. A representative sample of three to five large round bales from each lot, will be on site for inspection by buyers. An auctioneer has been contracted for the 1 p.m. sale.

Hay will be sold on a per tonne basis with weights determined by calculating bale weight (to the nearest 10 pounds).

Yoder says the sale benefits both hay producers and hay buyers.

"The auction is useful in promoting hay quality, hay markets and hay production in the area," he says. "It acts as a forum for the exchange of pricing information between buyers and sellers, and helps determine the market value of hay sold on the basis of quality and nutrient content."

For more information on the auction contact Alberta Agriculture offices in Lac La Biche, at 623-5218 or Bonnyville at 826-3388.

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Contact: Harvey Yoder
623-5218

October 12, 1987
For immediate release

Department specialist heads national society

An Alberta Agriculture specialist who has worked with dozens of farm organizations and individuals across the province to improve communication skills has been named president of a national society.

BARB STROH

Barb Stroh, the department's extension specialist in Camrose, who began her career as a district home economist, has been elected president of the Canadian Society of Extension (CSE).

The Canadian organization with more than 400 members, including about 70 in Alberta, is dedicated to improving the abilities and standards of professionals involved in the agriculture extension field.

For many Alberta farmers and farm organizations the most familiar extension service is probably that provided by the local district agriculturist or district home economist. A large part of their job involves "extending" farm production and management information from a variety of sources to producers and their families.

Stroh was elected president of the body which represents extension specialists from government, universities, colleges and private industry.

"Because of technical advances and ongoing research, the extension role is also changing," says Stroh. "The challenge is there for extension specialists to keep pace with technology. The work of the professional association becomes even more important in helping members keep abreast of what others are doing."

(Cont'd)

Beginning her career with the department in 1969 as a district home economist in Vulcan, Stroh went on to lead several special projects such as providing programs to Indian reserves and being involved in leadership development work.

Later when the department created the field services sector, Stroh was named extension specialist. She is responsible for extension training of department staff and has provided seminars for many rural organizations and producer groups.

"Extension involves effective communication," says Stroh. "On one hand you have a body of information. On the other hand you have individuals or a group that may find that information useful. Through extension skills you learn the best techniques to deliver that information so it can be of the most use."

A member of the CSE for 18 years, Stroh has been an executive member for the past five years.

The society will be holding its annual meeting in Calgary in 1988, in conjunction with the annual meeting of the Agriculture Institute of Canada. The institute is an umbrella organization which encompasses several groups including societies such as CSE, and institutes such as the Alberta Institute of Agrologists.

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Contact: Barb Stroh
679-1210

October 12, 1987
For immediate release

Regional specialist elected to executive

Louise Starling, Alberta Agriculture's regional home economist in Airdrie, has been elected to a two year term as a director of the Canadian Society of Extension (CSE).

Starling, who began her career with the department as a district home economist working in Red Deer, Rocky Mountain House and Calgary, will be part of the society's national executive.

The new director will be a member of the CSE newsletter committee, and participate in a review of the society's goals and future direction. She and Three Hills district agriculturist Jack Hazelwood, will also co-chair the society's 1988 annual meeting to be held in Calgary.

The Canadian organization with more than 400 members, including about 70 in Alberta, is dedicated to improving the abilities and standards of professionals involved in the agriculture extension field.

For many Alberta farmers and farm organizations the most familiar extension service is probably that provided by the local district agriculturist or district home economist. A large part of their job involves "extending" farm production and management information from a variety of sources to producers and their families.

The CSE represents extension specialists from government, universities, colleges and private industry.

Starling, who was born and raised at Stettler, has been a society member since 1969.

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Contact: Louise Starling
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October 12, 1987
For immediate release

Farmers test the zero-till waters

A group of Peace River area farmers interested in conservation farming have banded together to rent a no-till seed drill in a three-year trial project.

About 10 farmers within the agriculture district around the town of Peace River will be participating in the scheme that will hopefully save them money and protect the soil resource.

District Agriculturist Brian Sawatzky says while the group understands the value of no-till farming, they want to see if all the claims are true before they invest money in new equipment.

Sawatzky, who has been working with John Heinonen of the Prairie Farm Rehabilitation Administration (PFRA), in getting the project organized, says there are a lot of misconceptions about no-till farming.

"These farmers like the principles of no-till farming, but it's too expensive for each one to put out money for a no-till seed drill," he says. "Equipment like a Haybuster 1000 costs between $35,000 and $40,000 and no one can afford that unless they are sure about what they want."

Heinonen, a soil conservationist for the region, says the project will provide a practical demonstration of conservation farming.

"They want to see for themselves that no-till farming works," he says. "Some people think if you don't cultivate the soil will get too hard, that there will be too much trash on the ground, that the weeds will get out of hand, and that the soil won't warm up fast enough in the spring for early germination.

"And I don't believe these problems result from no-till farming. I hope this three-year project will show farmers the value of zero-tillage."

He says soil compaction is not a problem in the Peace and a change in farming practices can prevent other problems from arising.

Sawatzky and Heinonen say while they support no-till farming as a soil conservation measure, farmers are interested in the cost savings.

(Cont'd)

Farmers test zero-till waters (cont'd)

"At the very least the cost of no-till farming is comparable to conventional methods, and those who have been involved in zero-till say there is a cost saving," says Sawatzky.

Heinonen says his interest in promoting zero-tillage comes from aerial surveys which show a serious water erosion problem in the region every spring.

"Early in the year or after heavy rainfalls it is obvious that where soil is bare, there is erosion," he says. "Where there is stubble or ground cover, there is no problem."

He says farmers applying zero-till measures will need to make sure straw is evenly spread over the field, may need an early spring herbicide application to control weeds, and may see an initial increase in fertilizer costs. However, he says once the system is in place costs should decline.

The PFRA spokesman says there will be fuel savings by making fewer passes over the field. Less equipment is required, reducing capital costs. Maintenance costs are reduced and there is the hidden, but substantial, value of protecting the soil resource and improving soil quality.

"This is something that hasn't been tried extensively in the Peace region," says Sawatzky. "But there are advantages from several standpoints. If the motivation is not for soil conservation, I believe the better managers have found it also saves money."

PFRA and Alberta Agriculture have provided technical and moral support to the group in organizing the project. The farmers have also applied for financial help from the Northern Alberta Development Agreement.

The no-till seed drill is expected to be delivered and in-use next spring. The specialists will be working with the farmers to monitor the project and determine if zero-till farming lives up to expectations.

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Contact: Brian Sawatzky
624-6205

John Heinonen
624-3386

EDITOR'S NOTE

Following are two articles prepared by Dr. Laura Rutter on factors that may be involved if beef or dairy farmers are having trouble with too many open cows.

The first article "Don't blame breeding managment, it may be the cow" is an overview of the problem, while the second article "First five weeks present highest risk to pregnancy" is a more detailed look at the issue.

The articles can either be used as two separate stories that stand alone or as a two part feature.

Alberta Agriculture, Print Media Branch, Phone: (403) 427-2121

Don't blame breeding management, it may be the cow

Beef and dairy farmers shouldn't automatically blame their management if cows return to heat about 40 days after the first breeding service, says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

Dr. Laura Rutter says in many cases the cow may be at fault. She says if the heat detection and breeding management system are sound it is likely the cow did conceive, but reabsorbed or sloughed the embryo.

"The average interval between two heat periods in cattle is 21 days," says Rutter. "A farmer seeing a cow in heat around day 40 (after first service) probably concludes the cow failed to conceive. He may assume he missed a heat cycle, and the chance to have her re-serviced. But this may not be the case."

In most healthy animals, nature looks after the reproduction process without a hitch, but there is a delicate and crucial sequence of events that must take place from the moment the female is bred, says the reproductive physiologist with the department in Edmonton. If conditions aren't quite right at any one of these stages it could be game over.

Rutter says a cow returning to heat at day 40 may have conceived, but lost the pregnancy for one of several reasons and then returned to a normal estrus cycle.

Rutter says cows that repeatedly fail to conceive or lose a pregnancy early in the game are good candidates to be culled. It indicates, regardless of how favored the animal is, she may always have trouble producing a calf.

The specialist says there are three reasons for pregnancy losses.

The egg may simply fail to fertilize usually indicating a genital tract abnormality or questionable semen fertility. The egg may fertilize, but the embryo dies during the first 33 days because something goes wrong with that delicate sequence of events. And although in healthy herds it happens in only about 2.5 per cent of cases, the cow may abort at some point between 35 and 260 days after breeding.

Rutter says beef and dairymen should expect a minimum 75 per cent conception rate after the first breeding service and a minimum of 95 per cent pregnancy rate after two services.

(Cont'd)

Don't blame management, it may be the cow (cont'd)

"These minimums should apply to both beef and dairy females as well as heifers and cows," says Rutter. "Many producers feel these minimums are unrealistic, citing level of milk production in dairy cows, growth rate in beef heifers, artificial insemination techniques or other management practices as reasons for not optimizing reproduction.

"However, a few top producers in Alberta and elsewhere are achieving and surpassing these minimums. I believe these minimums should be goals for which producers should aim, taking into account the different economic conditions present in individual situations."

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Contact: Dr. Laura Rutter
427-5304

October 12, 1987
For immediate release

First five weeks present highest risk to pregnancy

About the first five weeks after breeding are the most critical in achieving a full-term pregnancy in both beef and dairy cattle, says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

There are some very crucial physical events which must happen to ensure egg fertilization and survival of the embryo, says Dr. Laura Rutter, a reproduction physiologist with the department, in Edmonton.

Rutter says often if a cow returns to heat 20 to 40 days after first breeding service, a farmer may assume the cow failed to conceive. In fact the egg may have been fertilized, but for one of several reasons the embryo was lost.

Rutter says there are three reasons for pregnancy losses which include failure of the egg to be fertilized; embryonic death at some stage between six and 33 days after breeding, and abortion.

She says a cow that fails to conceive after two breeding services will probably always have trouble and should be culled from the herd.

FAILURE TO FERTILIZE

Fertilization failure is apparent within three days after breeding, says the specialist.

"Most fertilization failures can be attributed to genital tract abnormalities which impair transport of the egg or sperm. Problems can also be blamed on inappropriate timing of inseminations and/or lack of sire fertility," says Rutter.

She says heat stress can also cause fertilization problems if temperatures are extremely hot the day after breeding. Although there is no conclusive data, cows that are underfed also often have conception problems.

Comparing the rate of fertilization failures between heifers and cows, Rutter says research shows not only a difference between age of animal but a difference between beef and dairy cattle.

(Cont'd)

First five weeks present highest risk to pregnancy (Cont'd)

In beef cattle, heifers showed a higher failure rate than mature cows that had had at least one calf. In contrast, dairy cows had a higher fertilization failure rate than dairy heifers.

Rutter suggests the difference may be that beef heifers have just reached puberty when bred for the first time and their reproductive system may not be sexually mature. Dairy heifers reach puberty earlier, have had more than one estrous cycle, and may be considered more sexually mature at first breeding. Mature dairy cows are under production stress at time of breeding which may influence the fertilization.

EMBRYONIC DEATH

Even after the cow does conceive there is a high risk during the first month that she could lose the pregnancy.

Rutter says there are three stages in early pregnancy when embryonic death is most common. If events at the six to eight day mark, the 16-day mark, or at the 33-day mark don't go as planned, the embryo can be lost.

At the six to eight day stage after breeding, the embryo is in the process of moving from the oviduct to the uterus. Rutter says it is common to lose a pregnancy at this stage because often something isn't quite right with the uterine environment and the embryo can't survive.

"Hormonal imbalances, ovarian dysfunction, or disease factors could all contribute to a hostile uterine environment," she says. "Chromosome abnormalities resulting from the fusion of the egg and sperm would also typically result in embyro death at this stage."

The specialist says in normal females chromosomal abnormalities are very low, although the incidence has been reported to be as high as 10 per cent in repeat breeders.

Cows losing embryos as this stage will usually return to heat at the normal interval.

If the embryo successfully makes it to the uterus, the next hurdle is the "maternal recognition" stage at about day 16. Rutter says maternal recognition is the point when the cow's body clicks to the fact it is pregnant

(Cont'd)

First five weeks present highest risk to pregnancy (cont'd)

The specialist says the natural response of a cow's body is to reject foreign proteins. Once the cow is pregnant she must, on one hand, shut down that part of its immune system that would normally reject the embryo. On the other hand, she must maintain the mechanism which provides life support to the embryo.

It is critical that a tissue known as the corpus luteum continues to produce the hormone progesterone which is needed for embryo survival.

"Scientists now believe that the embryo produces a signal which is transmitted to the mother to maintain corpus luteum function," says Rutter. "If the embryo fails to produce the signal, or if the mother fails to respond to or recognize the signal the corpus luteum dies, progesterone levels in the circulation fall, and the female returns to heat.

"At this time the mother's natural immune response must also be suppressed in the uterus such that the embyro, which contains foreign proteins from the paternal side, is not attacked and destroyed. Estimates of pregnancy losses at this stage vary widely and range from zero to 25 per cent for both beef and dairy females."

Rutter says to maintain pregnancy from maternal recognition to the next stage of the process known as implantation, rather complex interactions between the embryo, uterus and ovary must take place.

"Factors which disrupt communication between these tissues, including disease, ovarian/uterine dysfunction and nutrition, would result in embryo losses," she say. "The exact mechanisms which cause this loss are not understood. Females in which the corpus luteum dies between day 17 and 19 will return to heat at the normal interval. If the corpus luteum dies after day 19, the female will have slightly prolonged cycle of between 25 and 30 days."

At about day 33 after breeding implantation occurs. Up to this point the embryo has been free-floating in the uterus, living on fluids or "uterine milk". At this stage of maturity the embryo begins to make the first moves to attach itself to the uterine wall and tap directly into the cow's life support system.

(Cont'd)

First five weeks present highest risk to pregnancy (cont'd)

"Recent research shows that losses at this time account for less than 20 per cent of embryonic deaths and less than five per cent of total pregnancy losses," says Rutter. "Factors involved in losses at implantation are likely similar to those at maternal recognition of pregnancy, and are as equally unclear. Cows that experience pregnancy loss at this stage will return to heat about 42 days after first insemination.

"Because this is double the normal 21 day estrous cycle length, a farmer might suspect that heat was not detected accurately and was missed. However, cows which repeatedly return to heat 40 to 45 days after first service should be checked for abnormalities or disease, or be culled for fertility."

ABORTION

The reproduction specialist says less than 2.5 per cent of abortions occur in cattle unless there is disease or severe starvation in the herd. She says aborted fetus should always be sent to a veterinary lab for a postmortem diagnosis.

Rutter says because breeding problems generally don't go away, a cow that has problems once may always have problems.

"My advice is that even the highest producing cow in the herd shouldn't be kept beyond two heat cycles," she says. "I know some producers will have repeat breeders serviced six, seven times or more.

"If the problem stems from poor nutrition, faulty heat detection or AI techniques, corrective steps need to be taken with management. However, don't disregard the possibility that the cow is at fault. Repeat breeding cows that require three or more services to obtain pregnancy are simply uneconomical in either a dairy or beef operation."

For more information on cattle reproduction contact Dr. Rutter at the beef cattle and sheep branch in Edmonton at 427-5304.

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Contact: Dr. Laura Rutter
427-5304

October 12, 1987
For immediate release

September weather co-operated with harvest

With temperatures three to four degrees Celsius above normal and little or no rain for almost three weeks, September provided ideal harvest conditions for farmers, says a specialist with Alberta Agriculture in Edmonton.

Peter Dzikowski, agricultural weather resource specialist, says the fine September weather, which carried on into early October, has allowed harvesting operations and fall field work to be nearly completed.

Average temperatures for September were about four degrees Celsius above normal in much of northern Alberta, about three degrees Celsius above normal in central Alberta, and about two degrees Celsius above normal in southern Alberta.

Rainfall amounts were widely varied ranging from only 3.4 millimetres at Grande Prairie, nine per cent of normal; to 56.8 millimetres at Edmonton/Namao, 37 per cent above normal. In most of Alberta the rain fell early in September with no amounts greater than a few millimeters falling the rest of the month.

Total degree-days above 5 C for September were from 30 to 80 per cent above normal. This meant an extended pasture season, and generally good growing conditions for establishing fall sown crops, says the specialist.

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Contact: Peter Dzikowski
422-4385

Agri-News Briefs

THE ECONOMICS OF BUYING FEEDERS

Even at the best of times there are a lot of variables that can influence the economics of whether to buy or sell feeder cattle, says an Alberta Agriculture spokesman. Doug Walkey, regional marketing specialist in Red Deer, says producers should weigh the alternatives on a breakeven formula. "The decision to sell calves at weaning, as preconditioned calves, as background feeders, or as finished beef should depend on the profitability of each alternative," says Walkey. "Profit margins for each alternative will fluctuate over time, and should be analyzed periodically over the year. The best method to estimate profit is to calculate breakeven sale prices for each alternative." In a new Alberta Agriculture publication, "Buy-Sell Economics for Feeder Cattle", Walkey takes a look at some of the options and provides a worksheet example of costs involved. "Depending on a variety of production and marketing considerations, feeder cattle can be profitable or can cause a severe loss," he says. For a copy of the four-page report (Catalogue number Agdex 821-49) contact an Alberta Agriculture district office or write Alberta Agriculture, Publications Office, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

ALBERTA 4-H PROGRAM IS POPULAR

Alberta has the second largest 4-H program in the country, coming second to only Ontario, according to a recent survey. Bob Coe, Alberta Agriculture 4-H media specialist, says Alberta had 7,600 4-H members and 2,300 leaders registered in 1986. By comparison, B.C. had less than half as many members and leaders, while Saskatchewan and Manitoba each had about 6,000 members and 2,000 leaders. The average age of 4-H members in three western provinces is just under 12 years, except Manitoba where the average is just under 11 years of age. For more information on the report contact Bob Coe at 422-4444 in Edmonton.

(Cont'd)

FALL GARDEN WORK CAN REDUCE WEED AND PEST PROBLEMS

Cleaning up the garden and flower beds in the fall can help reduce some of the pest problems that appear each spring, says an Alberta Agriculture specialist. Cathy Linowski, an information officer with the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Centre in Brooks says the garden should be cleaned out, fruit trees checked, annual flowers removed and destroyed and lawns winterized. Linowski says dead plant material in the garden should be put in a compost pile or rototilled under. She says not to bury tomato and potato vines and unwanted fruit and tubers because they can harbor blights that can cause losses next year. The specialist says to check fruit trees for egg bands left by forest tent caterpillars and other disease and pest problems. Rake up leaves and any unwanted fruit. In raspberries cut out any diseased canes as well as two-year-old canes that bore fruit and just before freeze-up cover strawberry beds with five to 10 centimetres of clean straw to prevent winter injury. For more advice contact the Brooks centre at 362-3391.

BEGIN NOW TO PREVENT SNOW MOLD IN LAWNS

While there may be a tendency to leave a carpet of leaves on the lawn until spring, that heavy mat can lead to lawn disease problems next year. An Alberta Agriculture specialist says to keep the lawn raked and mowed in fall to prevent fungus diseases such as snow mold from developing over winter. "The development and severity of snow mold depends largely on the preceding fall weather and the condition of the lawn prior to snow fall," says Cathy Linowski, with the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Centre in Brooks. "If the ground is frozen solid before heavy snow fall, damage from snow mold may be minimal. If, however, a heavy snowfall is experience before freeze up, considerable lawn injury could occur. Lawns that have lush, tall growth when snow fall occurs are most susceptible to snow mold development." To reduce the risk of snow mold she says limit the amount of lawn thatch, remove or spread snow drifts to speed up melting, raking off fallen leaves in the fall, avoid late application of nitrogen fertilizers, mow lawns into late fall and limit watering of lawns after September 1. For more information contact the Brooks centre at 362-3391.

(Cont'd)

4-H MEMBERS ARE GOOD SALESMEN

Alberta 4-H members are leading Western Canada in the sale of pesticide safety kits. According to preliminary sales figures, Alberta members have sold more than 2,000 kits and raised an estimated $20,000 for club projects since the program began earlier this year. The safety kit project was initiated by Hoechst of Canada. The $30 kit contained basic equipment and protective clothing needed to help protect farmers handling agricultural chemicals. The clubs kept $10 from each sale for their own projects. It is expected the program will continue in 1988.

A DECADE OF FEED ANALYSIS DATA PUBLISHED

Alberta feed manufacturers and cattle feeders will be interested in a new Alberta Agriculture publication which shows the results of 10 years of feed analysis information. Prepared by Abdul Suleiman, a nutritionist with the soils and animal nutrition laboratory in Edmonton, the 52-page book provides a technical summary of feed analysis, performed at the lab, including barley, oats, wheat, triticale, peas, fababeans and forage crops. "Feed manufacturers and feeders should be aware of the wide variations in concentrations of some nutrients in certain feeds and the minimal variation in others," says Suleiman. "All data, with the exception of bushel weight and moisture, are reported on a moisture free (dry) basis. As well as reporting the average analyses for grains, roughages and byproduct feeds, the average macro and trace mineral contents of feed stuffs are also reported." For a copy of the report, "Average Analysis of Alberta Feeds", (Catalogue number Agdex 100/81-6) contact an Alberta Agriculture district office or write Alberta Agriculture, Publications Office, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

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Editor's Note

Attached is an up-to-date list of the preconditioned calf sales to be held at Alberta auction markets this fall. This list includes sales that have been scheduled since the story on the Alberta Certified Preconditioned Feeder program appeared in the September 21 issue of Agri-News. The sale dates will be of interest to local cattlemen.

For more information on the program or sale dates contact your nearest Alberta Agriculture district office or Jacquie Whittaker at the program office in Edmonton at 436-9345.

1987 ALBERTA PRECONDITIONED CALF SALES

(Dates set as of September 29, 1987)

November 19	Thursday 12 noon	Calgary Public Lvstk. Market Ltd. (Calgary 234-7429 - Murray)
November 26	Thursday 12:30 p.m.	Killam Auction Mart (Killam 672-4496)
November 27	Friday 2:00 p.m.	Lacombe Auction Market (Lacombe 782-3825)
November 27	Friday 9:00 a.m.	Perlich Bros. Sales Pavilion (Lethbridge 329-3101) (Approx. 1000 head)
December 1	Tuesday 11:00 a.m.	Stettler Auction Mart (1971) Ltd. (Stettler 742-2368) (Approx. 300-400 head)
December 2	Wednesday 10:00 a.m.	Highwood Auction Co. Ltd. (High River 652-3343) (Approx. 900 head)
December 2	Wednesday 12 noon	Innisfail Auction Market (Innisfail 227-3166) (Approx. 2000 head)
December 3	Thursday 10:00 a.m.	Fort Macleod Auction Market (Fort Macleod 553-3315)
December 3	Thursday 12 noon	Calgary Public Lvstk. Market Ltd. (Calgary 234-7429 - Murray)
December 4	Friday 10:00 a.m.	Edmonton Public Stockyards (Edmonton 473-5776) (Approx. 1000-1500 head)
December 4	Friday 10:00 a.m.	Grande Prairie Auction Market (Grande Prairie 532-3949) (Approx. 1000 head)
December 4	Friday 11:00 a.m.	Balog Auction Market (Lethbridge 320-1980) (Approx. 1000 head)
December 4	Friday 11:00 a.m.	Rimbey Auction Market (Rimbey 843-2439)

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1987 PRECONDITIONED CALF SALES - continued....

December 5	Saturday 10:00 a.m.	Vold Jones Vold Auction (Ponoka 783-5561) (Approx. 2000 head)
December 5	Saturday 1:00 p.m.	Cole's Auction Market (Rocky Mountain House 845-6103)
December 7	Monday 9:30 a.m.	Nilsson Livestock Ltd. (Clyde 348-5893) (Approx. 3000 head)
December 7	Monday 10:00 a.m.	Olds Auction Mart (Olds 556-3655) (Approx. 300-500 head)
December 7	Monday 11:00 a.m.	Burnt Lake Livestock Mart Ltd. (Red Deer 347-6100) (Approx. 1500 head)
December 9	Wednesday 11:00 a.m.	Wainwright Livestock Exchange (Wainwright 842-6151)
December 9	Wednesday 1:00 p.m.	Community Auction Sales Assoc. Pincher Creek 627-3466) (Approx. 400 head)
December 11	Friday 9:00 a.m.	Perlich Bros. Sales Pavilion (Lethbridge 329-3101) (Approx. 1000 head)
December 11	Friday 11:00 a.m.	Balog Auction Market (Lethbridge 320-1980) (Approx. 1000 head)

AGRI-NEWS

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For immediate release

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

October 19, 1987
For immediate release

Right to farm protected by Act

Associate Agriculture Minister Shirley Cripps, says new government legislation provides responsible Alberta farmers with assurance they won't be harassed for conducting routine farming practices.

The associate minister says The Agricultural Operation Practices Act, commonly referred to as right-to-farm legislation, allows producers to conduct their operations without being bothered by adjacent landowners.

The associate minister states, "I believe this act will prove to be a great benefit to Alberta's rural community. The act provides appropriate protection to farmers allowing them to carry on the task of producing food and revenue for our province without fear that they could be successfully sued by neighbors for doing so."

The bill, which was introduced in the legislature by Cypress-Redcliff MLA Alan Hyland, is intended to guard Alberta farmers against conflicts which can result when non-farm people move into agricultural areas.

In recent years, acreage owners across Canada have complained about smells, noise, dust and other byproducts of nearby farming operations and some have taken farm neighbors to court in an effort to force an end to agricultural activities.

Mrs. Cripps states, "In Alberta, lawsuits of this nature have generally been dismissed, or the court has found in favor of the farmer. Nevertheless, our producers have become increasingly concerned over potential nuisance suits, and in recent times have called for 'right to farm' or 'nuisance protection' legislation."

Responding to these concerns, the provincial government passed The Agricultural Operation Practices Act earlier this year.

The Act, similar to legislation enacted in other provinces and parts of the United States, is intended to protect farmers in nuisance lawsuits arising from objections to normal byproducts of the farm operation.

(Cont'd)

Right to farm protected by Act (Cont'd)

Farmers and other agricultural operations, following generally accepted practices and acting within the land use regulations of the municipality they live in, cannot be prevented from carrying on operations on the grounds of causing a nuisance.

This protection continues to apply to the agricultural operation in case of a change in municipal land use regulations, a change in the agricultural operation's ownership or personnel, or a change in land use adjacent to the operation.

As well as protecting producers, the Act also protects acreage owners and other non-farming country dwellers, by stipulating that only those farmers who abide by applicable land use bylaws and who follow accepted agricultural practices on their operations are exempt from liability under a nuisance action.

Mrs. Cripps states, "I am confident that the Agricultural Operation Practices Act, will help to ensure that both farming and non-farming rural Albertans are able to use and enjoy their property as neighbors and partners in the rural community."

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October 19, 1987
For immediate release

1987 crop production above 10-year average

After a dry spring which raised the spectre of wide-spread crop failure, Alberta's oil and cereal crops made a major comeback over the summer delivering yields that are generally above the 10-year average.

For the most part the 1987 crop, by mid-October, was already in the bin, says an Alberta Agriculture specialist. Referring to the six major cereal and oilseed crops, Keir Packer, crop statistician says production was only about two million metric tonnes below the 1986 record harvest.

Packer says wheat, oats, barley, rye, flax and canola production is estimated at about 15.5 million metric tonnes this year, down from the 17.6 million tonnes harvested in 1986. And again, in general terms, the quality is quite good.

"After a very wet August, weather conditions improved greatly in September and early October," he says. "With five consecutive weeks of ideal conditions, 98 per cent of the crop was taken off. Remaining fields are either too wet or have crops with large amounts of regrowth which is still fairly green."

He predicts most fall field work will finish this year as producers make rapid progress with cultivation and application of fertilizer and herbicides.

Packer says while a fairly dry September was good news for harvesting but it has created a lack of surface soil moisture. The dry conditions are making cultivation more difficult and are slowing the emergence of later seeded fall crops in southern areas.

"Supplies of feed grain and fodder appear to be adequate in all regions," he says. "Hay production responded to the ideal growing conditions in July and August producing good second cuts in most areas. But pasture conditions have started to deteriorate in the north-eastern and Peace River regions. Some rain at this time would improve soil moisture and its workability."

(Cont'd)

1987 crop production above 10-year average (cont'd)

Packer says the cereal and oilseed crop grades were not as badly hurt by the wet August weather as first thought. The following table indicates the percentage of crop to make each grade in 1987. For comparison purposes the 1986 grades and a 10-year average are also given.

	1987 (%)	1986 (%)	10 Year Average (%)
Hard Red Spring Wheat			
1 CWRS	12	18	32
2 CWRS	46	15	21
3 CWRS	37	45	34
Feed	5	22	12
Barley			
Select	8	9	9
1 CW	82	70	66
2 CW	10	21	25
Canola			
1 Canada	75	53	80
2 Canada	20	32	15
3 Canada	5	11	4
Sample	0	4	1

"In all, 58 per cent of the wheat will grade in the top two making it a relatively good year," he says. "Only 12 per cent of this year's wheat crop will grade #1 CWRS. This is below last year's level of 18 per cent and the long term average of over 30 per cent. To compensate for this 46 per cent of Hard Red Spring Wheat is expected to grade #2 CWRS well above last year's level and the long term average. Feed wheat is below normal accounting for only five per cent of this year's crop."

Barley grades also look good, says Packer. Select grades are expected to make up eight per cent of the 1987-88 production with another 82 per cent falling into the #1 CW class.

Canola has also recovered from last year's dismal grading pattern. About 75 per cent of this year's canola will grade #1 Canada with 20 per cent going #2 Canada. Very little will go as sample this year.

"Despite the poor weather in August, grades held up well enough to produce average results or better," he says.

(Cont'd)

1987 crop production above 10-year average (cont'd)

Looking at production figures for the six major cereals and oilseeds, the specialist says the numbers are down but still good.

	1986	1987	1986	1987	1986	1987
	-000, acres-		-bushels/acre-		-production- -000, tonnes-	
Winter Wheat	450	470	39.6	31.7	484	406
Spring Wheat	6,500	6,000	34.9	29.2	6 170	4 763
Durum Wheat	650	800	31.5	31.3	558	680
All Wheat	7,600	7,270	34.9	29.6	7 212	5 849
Oats(grain)	1,300	1,250	72.3	65.6	1 450	1 265
Barley(grain)	5,550	5,700	59.5	54.0	7 185	6 706
Rye	215	220	37.2	25.6	173	137
Flax	85	70	22.4	21.4	48	38
Canola	2,800	2,850	25.4	23.9	1 610	1 542
Total					17 678	15 537

"Yields were below last year's record levels," says Packer. "But they were still above the 10 year average in all cases except wheat, which was average and rye which was below average.

"Total production at 15.5 million metric tonnes for the six major crops is two million tonnes below last year's, but excellent none the less."

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Contact: Keir Packer
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October 19, 1987
For immediate release

Falher is Canada's honey capital

While Toronto may be known as Hogtown and Calgary as Cowtown, Alberta's Peace River region can stake its own agricultural claim in Falher, the Beetown.

With only about 1,200 residents, Falher (Fa-lare) isn't a very big dot on the Alberta road map, but that hasn't prevented the community from becoming the honey capital of Canada.

Near the centre of the Smoky River Municipal District, the community - named after its founding father, Roman Catholic priest Constant Falher - is the largest honey producing area in Alberta and Canada. With about 25,000 producing hives it has more honey bees per cultivated square mile than any other region.

Falher beekeepers contribute to the more than 12 million pounds of honey produced annually in the region, making the Peace a major player in Alberta's honey industry.

"The Peace region supplies about 45 per cent of the honey produced in Alberta," says Doug Colter, Alberta Agriculture's assistant provincial apiculture specialist in Falher.

Colter says there are about 1,500 beekeepers in Alberta although the majority are involved on a part-time or hobby basis. About 350 are regarded as commercial beekeepers with 100 or more hives in production. There are about 194,000 producing hives in the province.

"Looking at the Peace, there are about 220 beekeepers in the region and 80 per cent of those, or about 167 are considered commercial operations," he says. "We have about 75,000 producing bee colonies in the region."

The 20 to 24 million pounds of honey produced annually in Alberta is estimated to be worth about $12 million a year to producers, depending on where the price is on the roller-coaster honey market.

Part of this honey goes to meet Alberta's domestic consumption of about two million pounds a year. About 20 million pounds are shipped to Quebec and United States markets.

(Cont'd)

Falher is Canada's honey capital (cont'd)

Colter says because of the U.S. Farm Bill and surplus honey, exports to the U.S. will be dramatically reduced this year, keeping pressure on prices.

With the 1987 honey season over, Colter says it was an average to above average production year across the province.

"Honey production in southern Alberta was about normal, although in parts of central Alberta and the Peace region production was above average, due to good weather conditions."

Colter says the Peace region exceeded the provincial average.

"We estimate the provincial honey production average at about 128 pounds of honey per colony (producing hive)," says Colter. "This year average production in the north Peace was estimated at 175 pounds per colony, while it was 190 to 200 pounds per colony in the south Peace and about 250 pounds of honey per colony in the Fort Vermilion area."

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Contact: Doug Colter
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October 19, 1987
For immediate release

Honey prices are bitter pill for industry

With production up and prices down it isn't the best year on record for Alberta's honey producers, but industry confidence remains strong.

Although honey production was above average in many parts of the province this year, Alberta beekeepers are facing some tough sledding as the market price for the natural sweetener nears an all-time low.

Fred Boyce, an Alberta Agriculture market analyst, says wholesale prices for honey are expected to be in the 40 to 45 cent-a-pound range this year compared to a price of about 60 cents a pound at this time last year.

Boyce says the main reason for the low prices is what he considers is a short-term collapse in export markets.

"Traditionally Canada has exported about 80 per cent of its production to the United States," says Boyce. "The US has decided to reduce the amount of honey it has in storage, so they are importing very little honey this year.

"At the same time their industry has launched a honey promotion campaign which has had some affect on increasing honey consumption. Reduced imports and higher consumption has really cut into their surplus. I expect that within a year or year-and-a-half they will be back to a reasonable level of imports. I'm not as pessimistic as some who feel prices will take a long time to recover."

Boyce says in the meantime the low prices will make it difficult for producers, particularly those just starting out, those who recently expanded, or those carrying a heavy debt load.

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Contact: Fred Boyce
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October 19, 1987
For immediate release

Register now for financial management course

Farm families interested in getting a handle on their financial affairs and improving farm management skills should check with their local Alberta Agriculture district office about the "Gear Up Financially" course.

This is the third year for the brass-tacks program in farm financial management which last year attracted about 540 farm couples to the 10-day session.

About 40 district offices, scheduled to offer the course this fall and winter, are now taking registrations, says Gordon McNaughton, provincial co-ordinator of the program.

"Many district offices will be offering the course starting sometime in November," he says. "If a farm couple is interested they should let their district office know. Even if that district office isn't on the 1987 schedule, a course could be arranged if there is enough interest."

"Gear Up Financially" is an intensive, practical, hands-on course which allows farm couples to work with financial experts in setting up and maintaining a proper set of books. It also teaches them how to use that information in making everyday farm management decisions.

Farmers need not be alarmed if they feel they don't have a head for figures. The course presents in down-to-earth terms, management theories and principles which can be applied to their operation.

Enrolment in the course, in most district offices, will be limited to about 15 farm couples, says McNaughton, a farm management specialist with Alberta Agriculture in Olds.

McNaughton cautions it is an intensive course and farm couples must be prepared to invest the time. This includes not only the 10 days required for the course, but some "home work" as well.

(Cont'd)

Register now for financial management course (Cont'd)

"Farm couples who have taken the course agree that it is worth the effort," he says. "This commitment of time can provide an invaluable service for the future."

The course covers areas such as financial statements - what they are and how to prepare them; what records are needed; what they mean; information on proven management principles; and management strategies to consider for individual farms.

Farm couples work with their own financial information, prepare their own financial statements, identify new opportunities and alternatives, and apply everything they learn to their own farm business.

McNaughton says regardless of how people keep their books or the state of farm cash flow, "Gear Up Financially" has something to offer.

"The course provides people with a better understanding of their financial situation, improves effectiveness in managing their farm business, offers a new look at different alternatives and opportunities, gives them the ability to deal with their banker with confidence and provides a sense of control over their affairs in difficult times," he says.

For more information on Gear Up Financially contact any district home economist, district agriculturist, or the farm business management branch in Olds at 556-4236.

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Contact: Gordon McNaughton
556-4236

October 19, 1987
For immediate release

Trade efforts realigned through staff appointments

The executive director of Alberta Agriculture's market development division has announced the appointment of four trade specialists who will be promoting sale of Alberta agricultural products around the world.

Dennis Glover says the appointments involve ongoing market development work in Asian and Pacific rim countries; Europe, USSR, the Middle East; and the United States.

Glover says the appointments also reflect a realignment of duties supporting the direction the private sector is taking in these foreign markets. The export of Alberta agriculture products is worth about $2.5 billion a year to the provincial economy.

After serving the department as Trade Director - Peoples Republic of China and Hong Kong for 18 months, David Wong has been named Senior International Trade Director for the Pacific/Asia region.

Wong will have overall responsibility for market development efforts in Japan, South Korea, Hong Kong, China and South East Asia with emphasis on Thailand, Malaysia and the Philippines.

The senior manager will continue to have direct involvement with market development efforts in the Peoples Republic of China.

Joining Wong and Ab Barrie in this major trading area are Jeff Kucharski and Bob Prather.

Barrie has represented Alberta Agricuture in the province's Agent General's office in Tokyo since 1985 and has recently returned to the market development office. He will continue to focus on promotion of agriculture commodities in Japan and South Korea.

Jeff Kucharski, who joined the department about two-and-a-half years ago, has been named Trade Director for the Pacific/Asia region. He will focus on working with Alberta food processors and manufacturers in developing products for the Japanese market.

(Cont'd)

Trade efforts realigned through staff appointments (cont'd)

The new trade director had earlier been involved in the Seiyu Store exchange program. Kucharski learned the basics of the Japanese retail industry by working in stores owned by the major retail chain in Japan. In return, a Seiyu representative is in Alberta learning the industry from this side.

"With this type of background, Jeff will be providing advice to Alberta suppliers on such things as packaging and labelling which meet Japanese standards, and assisting with new product development," says Glover.

Bob Prather, who has been with Alberta Agriculture for about 12 years has moved from his post with the department's trade policy secretariat to take on a new role in two large market areas.

Prather will be working with both David Wong in Pacific Rim countries and with Doug Hill, Senior International Trade Director for Europe, USSR, Africa and the Middle East.

"Bob will be working in both these major markets," says Glover. "Part of his time he will be working on market development in Thailand, Malaysia and the Philippines, and the other half will be spent providing back-up in the European and USSR markets. Because of the wide difference in commodities and cultures this position certainly presents a challenge."

During his years with the department, Prather has worked in resource economics, market analysis, agri-food development and trade policy branches.

Brenda Lennox, who has been a research officer with the branch for four years has been named Associate Trade Director - Americas.

In her new role, Lennox will be working in the U.S. market with a focus on increasing Alberta's grocery-products trade into the Pacific North West.

"Brenda's responsibilities will expand beyond that into areas such as helping implement components of a recent beef study," says Glover. The study, as an example, has shown there is potential for Alberta suppliers to market more processed beef into the Pacific North West. As well Brenda will be working with the processed food industry in trade show activities."

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Contact: Dennis Glover
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October 19, 1987
For immediate release

Comprehensive beef herd management guide released

A comprehensive and up-to-date reference guide, providing information on virtually every aspect of cow/calf management, is now available to beef producers.

Alberta Agriculture's Beef Herd Management Reference Binder and Study Guide contains about 800 pages of information and management advice on all aspects of a cow/calf operation from genetics and grazing management, to handling facilities and financing.

"It may look intimidating but it is not expected that beef producers will sit down and read this guide from cover to cover," says Pat Davidson, co-ordinator of the department's home study program.

"There are three key sections in the reference guide that producers should review to appreciate the type of material and subjects covered. The bulk of information represents background material and factsheets which provide details on beef herd production and management."

There are more than 175 factsheets in the guide which provide detailed information on genetics, nutrition, reproduction, disease and pest control, grazing management, marketing, handling and feeding facilities, and finance.

It's organized so a producer can easily look up detailed information on a specific topic.

The management section takes a farmer through the critical stages of the biological cycle of the cow, says Davidson. For each stage, the management guide outlines herd management objectives, gives points to remember, recommends good management practices and makes suggestions for planning ahead.

The troubleshooting section is just that. If a producer, as an example, finds he has too many open cows or calf weights aren't what he expected, the troubleshooting guide can help pinpoint problems and suggest the most probable cause of them.

(Cont'd)

Comprehensive beef herd management guide released (cont'd)

The study guide section provides a framework and the materials to study beef herd management. It works a farmer through the production cycle of the beef herd logically and systematically.

"Each section refers the users to specific factsheets in the binder," says Davidson. "The management guide as an example may discuss the cow's changing nutritional requirements during the different stages of pregnancy and then refer the farmer to specific factsheets in the binder for more details on nutrition."

The complete study guide, available for $35, reflects an integrated approach to beef herd management. Specialists with the department's beef cattle and sheep branch encourage producers to look at the management of the overall beef operation in reaching objectives and production efficiency.

One of the key contributors to the guide was Dr. John Basarab, the department's beef management specialist. Basarab has been instrumental in helping Alberta producers form local beef herd management clubs.

Along with the study guide, plans are also being made to produce a beef herd management video and develop computer software to assist commercial beef producers in record keeping.

For more information or an application form for the beef herd management study guide contact any Alberta Agriculture district office or Pat Davidson at Home Study Office, Alberta Agriculture, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6 or phone 427-2404.

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Contact: Pat Davidson
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October 19, 1987
For immediate release

Pruning helps maintain shelterbelt quality

Paying annual attention to pruning the farmstead shelterbelt will help enhance the beauty and protection provided by the trees and shrubs, says a specialist with Alberta Agriculture.

Brendan Casement, co-ordinator of the shelterbelt program for the province, says checking the shelterbelt each year to remove dead and unwanted material won't reduce the effectiveness of the windbreak and can prevent major problems down the road.

"The objective in all pruning is to maintain the health, strength and character of the plants being pruned," says the specialist with the Alberta Tree Nursury and Horticulture Centre in Edmonton. "The removal of dead, diseased and damaged branches should be done first, followed by removal of any weak and crossing branches. That should be sufficient pruning to maintain the quality of the stand."

The specialist says occasionally a row of trees should be eliminated, at ground level, to allow slower growing trees to release. He says a common example is removing a row of poplar trees so a row of ash, maple, spruce or pine trees behind it, can flourish.

"Poplars should only be planted for temporary shelterbelts since their useful life is 25 to 40 years," he says. "Most shelterbelts were designed so the poplars would be removed when the other types of trees were tall enough for the required shelter."

Casement says although there is more time in winter to eliminate a row of poplars, cutting in late July produces the best results with minimal growth of new shoots. In mid-summer poplars have the lowest amount of stored food material and will sucker less. If removal is left until winter, the trees will have a good food reserve in the roots, which will support suckering in the spring.

(Cont'd)

Pruning helps maintain shelterbelt quality (cont'd)

But when pruning trees, branches should be removed carefully so they don't tear bark from the trunk when they fall. The cut should be made just outside the branch collar to leave the smallest wound possible. Casement says not to leave any stubs because they often heal poorly and allow disease to enter the trunk of the tree.

The specialist says topping the tree is a poor excuse for pruning.

"Topping trees is a very temporary way of reducing their height and is usually done in the mistaken belief that it will strengthen the tree," says Casement. "In fact, any resultant growth is weak and crowded, the new growth is poorly attached and becomes a hazard, and in many cases there is such poor recovery that the stump dies within a year or two."

He says the large cut created by topping often heals so poorly that rot enters the trunk and further weakens the stump. Another unexpected result of topping poplars is that suckering can take place anywhere along the roots.

"It is better to remove limbs if they are interferring with power lines so that the resultant growth is guided away," he says. "Topping trees under power lines is self perpetuating. Cutting back will have to be done every other year or so to remove the sprout growth.

"Trees are topped because of poor planning, lack of knowledge or poor advice. Prune properly and then enjoy the benefits of a good, safe shelterbelt for many years."

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Contact: Brendan Casement
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October 19, 1987
For immediate release

Jack Hazelwood receives national honor

JACK HAZELWOOD

A national award recognizing "outstanding achievement" in providing service to Alberta farmers and farm families has been presented to the Alberta Agriculture district agriculturist in Three Hills.

Jack Hazelwood, who has been with the department since 1977, was recently presented the 1987 Distinguished Extension Award by the Canadian Society of Extension (CSE).

Hazelwood who was born and raised in the south-central Alberta community of New Bridgen, was recognized for use of extension skills in promoting conservation.

"This award is in recognition of Jack's outstanding work in getting producers to adopt effective conservation practices," says a society statement. "His creativity has been demonstrated in many projects."

Hazelwood's nomination was prepared and submitted by Louise Starling, a long-time society member, who is regional home economist in Airdrie.

It highlighted his department extension work focusing on achievements such as coining the phrase, "Keep Your Stubble Up", which symbolizes the importance of maintaining crop residue cover to protect soil from erosion.

He also provided "major" input into the development of an award-winning soil conservation film on wind erosion, "Gone With The Wind...Too", and a "Conservation Farm" poster.

As well he is an active member of the Airdrie region soil management committee, responsible for developing a comprehensive soil conservation plan.

(Cont'd)

Jack Hazelwood receives national honor (Cont'd)

He has initiated several conservation activities and received the co-operation and support of district producers.

Hazlewood is one of about 400 members of the Canadian Society of Extension. The CSE is dedicated to improving the abilities and standards of professionals involved in the agriculture extension field. Its membership includes extension specialists from government, universities, colleges and private industry.

Along with his CSE involvement, the DA is also a member of the Alberta Institute of Agrologists, the Agricultural Institute of Canada, the Society of Range Management, and several community and sports organizations.

A 1970 graduate of the University of Alberta with a degree in agriculture, Hazelwood has worked in land management in both British Columbia and Alberta.

He began his career with Alberta Agriculture as DA in the north central district of Athabasca in 1977. He moved to Three Hills, a community about half way between Airdrie and Red Deer, in 1978.

In accepting the award, Hazelwood paid tribute to the people he has worked with over the years.

He acknowledged his office staff, his fellow DAs and district home economists, agricultural service board fieldmen, regional specialists, supervisors, district farmers and his family, for their support and assistance.

"I cannot in good conscience accept this award for myself," he said. "I can, however, very gladly accept the recognition and honor on behalf of the many people who all deserve a part of this award."

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Contact: Jack Hazelwood
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October 19, 1987
For immediate release

Treasury Branches offer boost to Alberta 4-H

Alberta Treasury Branches have launched a three-part program to promote 4-H in Alberta and help club members further their education.

In a recent announcement the financial institution said it is creating seven new scholarships, making prime-rate loans available to 4-H members, and setting up an awards program to recognize 4-H achievement.

George Lane, general manager of agriculture credit says the Treasury Branch program will provide support and encouragement to the 4-H movement which began 70 years ago in Alberta.

Under the three point plan the company will create seven $1,000 scholarships, provide a maximum $1,000 loan to help 4-H beef, sheep or swine club members buy livestock for their projects, and award bronze, silver, gold and platinum medallions to club members reaching levels of achievement.

"Alberta Treasury Branches will commit a scholarship to each of the seven 4-H regions of the province for $1,000 to be given to a first-year university student in any discipline in Alberta, "says Lane. "Many bursaries are for agricultural related studies, but Alberta Treasury Branch scholarships will allow for study in the discipline of the applicant's choice."

The loan program is available to any 4-H boy or girl needing to buy marketable livestock for club projects. Lane says the maximum is $1,000 this year, although it may be increased if there is demand.

Members applying for the loan must be between 10 and 21 years of age and have a form signed by a parent or club leader confirming that the applicant is a 4-H member. Parents must co-sign the loan.

"This allows young people who will be future producers to experience the 'learn to do by doing' 4-H philosophy by getting them into the business side of farming and making them familiar with the farm money management aspect," says Lane. "We want the boys and girls to learn business by coming in and getting started, by meeting the managers and knowing that it costs money to raise their animal."

(Cont'd)

Alberta 4-H and Treasury Branch officials meet to discuss new scholarships and other promotions. Above from left, George Lane, of Alberta Treasury Branches, Allan Shenfield, a director of the 4-H Foundation of Alberta, A.O. Bray, superintendent of Alberta Treasury Branches and Ted Youck, head of the Alberta Agriculture 4-H Branch.

The medallion program is intended not only to recognize achievement but to encourage members to stay involved longer with 4-H programs.

The medallions, which are available to all club members, will be awarded on the basis of points accumulated in record books. Bronze and silver medallions, for example, will be earned by junior members, while gold and platinum medallions will recognize points accumulated over the years by senior club members.

Lane says the details of the scoring system have not been finalized.

"Personal 4-H record books will be the basis on which winning a medallion will be established," he says. "All a member has to do is be an active member in their 4-H club, pursue all the various projects, exchanges, shows, executive offices, community activities and so on to be a winner.

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Contact: Bob Coe
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AGRI-NEWS

October 26, 1987

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For immediate release

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

October 26, 1987
For immediate release

Farm household spending surprising

Most Alberta farm families probably don't realize it costs nearly $24,000 a year to run the rural household, but a 1986 provincial survey tells the story.

An Alberta Agriculture and University of Alberta study funded by Farming for the Future shows the spending patterns of 318 Alberta farm families. The average cost of household expenses including food, clothing, housing, health care, recreation, transportation, insurance and savings, were $23,758 a year.

That compares with the annual household costs for an average Edmonton family of $29,535 and a national family average of $34,113 a year.

The FAMEX (Family Expenditure Study) family represents an average of 4.25 people, while the Edmonton family represents 2.6 people and the national family represents a household of 3.2 people.

Jean Wilson, family resource management specialist with Alberta Agriculture says, most people are surprised at the figures.

"Some people would take a quick guess and estimate it costs them between $5,000 and $10,000 a year for living expenses," she says. "But the reality is that non-farm expenditures, such as running the household and raising a family requires a sizable part of the farm income."

Wilson says it isn't expected that every farm family in the province keep the detailed records that study participants used, but she does recommend all families try keeping track of expenses for even a few months.

'Keeping household records not only makes families aware of how much it actually does cost, but it also gives them a chance to make changes in discretionary spending habits," says Wilson. "If people have asked themselves that question 'I don't know where the money goes?' this type of record keeping should provide the answer."

The 1986 FAMEX project was an expanded version of a similar survey conducted in 1985. Developed by Alberta Agriculture and the university, the most recent study was co-ordinated in the field by 62 district home economists from across the province. Participating families were asked to keep detailed records for a year.

(Cont'd)

Farm household spending surprising (cont'd)

Wilson says there was a wide range of spending patterns and it was often difficult for participating families to separate household expenses from farm expenses, particularly in areas of housing, transportation and savings.

She says while $23,758 was the average annual expenditure, household spending reports ranged from a low of about $11,000 a year to highs of about $30,000.

Looking at the average FAMEX family costs in the major categories, the study shows families spend about $5,502 a year on food including groceries and eating out.

It was estimated farm families consume another $1,400 worth of home-grown farm and garden produce, but this figure was not included in the study's food figure.

Other major expenses included: clothing $1,972; housing $5,744; personal and health care $1,466; recreation, entertainment and education, $2,577; gifts $1,563; tobacco and alcohol $467; miscellaneous $552; transportation $3,004; and security which includes savings and insurance $911.

Wilson says while half the study families reported no savings or other securities this probably reflects the difficulty in separating money invested in the farm business from the household, as well as reflecting the difficult economic situation on the farm.

Comparing the three major expense categories, the study showed it costs a FAMEX family $5,502 a year for food, the Edmonton family $4,961 a year for food and the national family $6,140 a year for food.

Housing cost the FAMEX family $5,744, the Edmonton family $9,062 and the national family $10,338. Again, Wilson says the difference could be attributed to the difficulty in separating a household mortgage from the farm business and lower rural land values.

Transporation costs the FAMEX family $3,004, the Edmonton family $3,853 and the national family $5,214.

For more information or a copy of the study report contact any district home economist or Alberta Agriculture, Home Economics Branch, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

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Contact: Jean Wilson - Shirley Myers
427-2412

October 26, 1987
For immediate release

Alberta Aryshires tops at dairy expo

What Alberta dairymen may lack in quantity, they make up for in quality as Aryshire breeders demonstrated recently at an international dairy show in Wisconsin.

Three Alberta Aryshire breeders, participating in the World Dairy Expo, pooled the best of their cattle in a major show category and placed second behind a pooled herd from Quebec.

"This is only the second time Alberta Aryshires have been represented at the World Expo," says Doug Bienert, an Alberta Agriculture trade director. "Quebec has been a leading Aryshire province for many years.

"For Alberta breeders to place ahead of all other dairymen in the United States is quite an accomplishment. It just underscores our claim that we may not have the biggest dairy industry, but we are leaders in producing quality animals."

The Alberta cattle were entered in the state herd competition, which involves breeders from each state or province taking the top animals from different herds at the show and entering the select group in competition. About 300 head of Aryshire cattle from across North America were shown in various classes.

Participating in the show from Alberta were cattle owned by Frank Saville of Eckville, Ellen Hockley of Stauffer, and Sven and Betty Larsen of Glen Nethy Farms of Innisfail.

Along with being part of the state herd, Larsen's cattle also came second in the breeders' herd competition, behind another Canadian entry.

Bienert says in the senior competition categories Canadian cattle won all the top honors including the grand champion and reserve grand champion awards.

This was the eighth year Alberta Agriculture has been involved in the dairy expo. In the past Alberta Holstein cattle have been featured. This year the Alberta Aryshire Association took a turn at promoting its breed. The Aryshire breeders working through the Alberta Canada All Breeds Association (ACABA) joined the department in its display.

(Cont'd)

Alberta Aryshires tops at dairy expo (cont'd)

"Along with being the premier dairy trade show in the world, another major feature, particularly for dairy breeders, is the international guests the World Expo attracts," says Bienert. "This year there were about 1,800 international guests from 60 different countries at the show. Many of these visitors are interested in seeing the top dairy cattle available and improving the quality of the dairy cattle in their own countries."

Joining Alberta Agriculture and ACABA in this year's booth were representatives of Western Breeders International of Balzac and Universal Genetics Ltd. of Cardston.

"There was a tremendous response not only to Alberta Aryshire cattle, but for these two companies as well," says Bienert. "Both companies were extremely busy handling requests for information and had great success in sales of Canadian dairy semen."

The trade specialist says the value of being at the show is not necessarily direct sales made during the five-day event, but the contacts and the exposure.

"The trade show offers the type of promotion it is hard to find anywhere else," says Bienert. "The show brings together thousands of dairymen from across the United States and from around the world. The success of Alberta breeders in these competitions makes potential buyers not only aware of Alberta, but aware of the quality of cattle we have here."

Bienert says through the trade show the Alberta dairy industry can establish contacts and invite breeders and buyers to visit the province.

"And once we get them on Alberta soil and show them the class of agriculture and the quality of livestock we have here its not hard to turn that visit into a long term sales relationship."

Bienert says he hopes eventually the three major Alberta dairy breeds, Holstein, Aryshire and Jersey, can all be represented at the dairy expo. With the trade show hosting the World Aryshire Conference in 1988, Alberta breeders are expected to place nearly two dozen Aryshire cattle in competition with 500 to 600 head of North American Aryshires.

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Contact: Doug Bienert
427-4241

October 26, 1987
For immediate release

Fertilizer grant claims accepted until 1989

Farmers planning to make use of the Alberta Farm Fertilizer Price Protection Plan are reminded they have about another nine months to buy fertilizer that is eligible for the grant, and until January 31, 1989 to submit an application for assistance.

Program administrator Dr. Bruce Jeffery says the program, which was created in 1984, was extended earlier this year by Agriculture Minister Peter Elzinga.

Fertilizer delivered and used on Alberta farmland by Alberta farmers between August 1, 1984 and July 31, 1988 is eligibile for the grant. Producers have until January 31, 1989 to pay for the fertilizer and make a claim.

"The program pays $50 per tonne of actual nitrogen and $25 per tonne of actual phosphate," says Jeffery. "For example, the amount of the grant would be $41 per tonne for anhydrous ammonia or $18.25 per tonne for 11-51-0."

Jeffery says the conditions and procedures for making application have not changed.

An applicant can only claim on the same fertilizer once, however, an applicant can make more than one application.

Application forms are available at Alberta Agriculture district offices. The application must be accompanied by transaction documents showing the tonnage (to three decimals), and the grade (formulation) of the fertilizer, the invoice number, date, and verification that the fertilizer was delivered and paid for.

Acceptable documentation includes original invoices, which can be copied at the DA office and returned to the applicant; dealer summary statements; or Form B's that are stamped and signed by the dealer.

Since the beginning of the program 78,664 applications have been received from 35,566 producers for a total payout of $49 million.

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Contact: Dr. H.B. Jeffery
422-5672

October 26, 1987
For immediate release

New head appointed to marketing branch

A former senior trade director with Alberta Agriculture in Edmonton has been named head of a new branch within the department's marketing services division.

Lou Normand, who most recently served the department as senior trade director of the Americas in the market development division, has taken over as head of the agri-food and processing development branch.

In making the announcement, Cliff Wulff, director of marketing services division, says the new branch is a merger of the agri-food development branch and the agricultural processing development branch.

The branch works with private industry in helping develop and promote new products and new markets for Alberta's processed foods.

Normand who joined the department in 1977 served as senior trade director for four years. Prior to that he was international trade director for Latin America, Africa and the Middle East.

"Lou's training and experience in management, marketing and finance along with his close association with industry will be valuable in undertaking the challenges of the new branch," says Wulff.

The branch will continue to help the food processing industry respond to market opportunities.

"Staff will continue to work with the private sector and assist in the highest priority activities needed to assure that the company and product is positioned for the market," says Wulff. "This includes developing marketing expertise within the private sector, development of new packaging and promotional literature and audio-visual material and advertising material."

The branch will also take a more active approach in industrial development by attracting new investment either from within or from outside Alberta. This will include both joint ventures or new investments in the agri-industries, in the food industry, in the agro-industrial sector and and for "high tech' products.

(Cont'd)

New head appointed to marketing branch (cont'd)

Working with Normand are four section managers. They include Gaylene Thomson as manager of the processed food development section, Lawrence Bailey, manager of the process engineering section, Susan Kitchen, manager of the meat and dairy development section and a manager of the commodity development section. This position is being filled on an acting basis by Garry Benoit.

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Contact: Cliff Wulff - Lou Normand
427-3166

October 26, 1987
For immediate release

Make plans for pork seminar

Alberta pork producers should set aside a few days in late January for an opportunity to hear top-flight information on hog production and an update on industry trends.

Three international experts, backed by several leading Alberta specialists will provide the program at the annual Alberta Pork Seminar at the Banff Springs Hotel, January 27 to 29.

Fred Schuld, head of Alberta Agriculture's pork industry branch, says the seminar will cover a wide range of topics from pig housing, to herd health and consumer trends.

Guest speakers this year include Dr. Seaton Baxter from Aberdeen Scotland, Dr. Tony Kempster of Bletchley, England and Dr. Paul Hemsworth of Werribee, Australia.

Baxter, who spoke at the 1987 seminar is a consultant on livestock housing and environment. Kempster is a specialist and researcher with the United Kingdom Meat and Livestock Commission working on meat quality and meat evaluation methods. Hemsworth, a swine behavior and management specialist, has done research and published information on the relationship between man and animals as it affects production results.

"The background and experience of these speakers will certainly provide Alberta producers with a greater understanding of key management issues," says Schuld.

The seminar which gets underway Wednesday, January 27 will look at pig housing, health, meat and meat processing, production and reproduction topics and farm management advice.

Speakers include Frank Aherne of the Animal Science Department of the University of Alberta; Brian Kennedy, Alberta Agriculture regional engineer from Vermilion; Harold Fast of VIDO in Saskatoon; Sam Harbison of the Swine AI Centre at Leduc; Steve Jones of Agriculture Canada research station at Lacombe; Marvin Salomons, Alberta Agriculture regional swine specialist from Red Deer; and several others.

(Cont'd)

Make plans for pork seminar (cont'd)

Roy Barrett, a pork producer from Ponoka who is also chairman of the Alberta Pork Producers Marketing Board, will also address the seminar along with veterinarians and consultants.

Producers, industry suppliers and farm groups are urged to register before December 1 to take advantage of early registration discounts.

For more information on the conference and accommodations contact Alberta Agriculture district offices, the pork industry branch in Edmonton at 427-5320, or the agriculture division of the U of A faculty of extension at 432-3029.

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Contact: Fred Schuld
427-5320

October 26, 1987
For immediate release

Wray Whitmore named northern sheep specialist

Ross Gould, head of the Alberta Agriculture's animal management section of the beef cattle and sheep branch, has announced the appointment of Wray Whitmore as a provincial sheep specialist.

Whitmore, who will be based at department headquarters in Edmonton, is replacing Cathy Gallivan, who moved to Airdrie earlier this month to assume a similar sheep specialist position at the south-central Alberta regional office.

Whitmore graduated from the University of Alberta in 1979 with a bachelor of science degree majoring in animal science. He worked for the university's department of animal science for three and a half years before returning to the classroom for further studies.

His work with the university included the care of animals on test in various research trials at the university farm, including the routine daily care of sheep in research trials.

Whitmore began his career with the department in 1986 as a ruminant nutritionist. In this role he has taken an active interest in sheep nutrition. Since joining the nutrition section staff, he has been the primary consultant for sheep producers requesting information on flock nutrition and diet formulation.

As sheep specialist for northern Alberta, Whitmore will assist sheep producers with all aspects of sheep production. He will also be responsible for co-ordinating the Sheep Record of Performance Home Test Program for the province.

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Contact: Wray Whitmore
427-5077

Agri-News Briefs

HORTICULTURE CONFERENCE SET FOR RED DEER

Alberta producers involved in all areas of horticulture production are urged to attend the first Alberta Horticultural Congress and Trade Show in Red Deer, November 12 to 14. The congress is organized by the Alberta Fresh Vegetable Marketing Board, the Alberta Greenhouse Growers Association and the Alberta Market Gardeners Association. Following registration and opening remarks November 12, the business portion of the event gets underway Friday November 13 at 7 a.m. Nearly two dozen specialists from Alberta and across Canada are slated to speak during the two days on topics such as water quality, pest identification, tomato production, disease detection, soil analysis, cole crops, beginner fruit growing, new vegetable cultivars, alternative crops and others. A major trade fair will also be held in conjunction with the congress at the Capri Centre. For more information on registration and accommodation contact the congress office in Millett at 387-4285, or Lloyd Hausher in Brooks at 362-3391.

ALTERNATIVE CROPS FEATURED AT LETHBRIDGE CONFERENCE

Farmers wondering if there are other cash crops that can be grown to supplement income generated by traditional cereals and oilseeds should plan to attend a two-day alternative crops conference in Lethbridge in November. Sponsored by Alberta Agriculture and the Pulse Growers Association of Alberta the November 12 and 13 conference will look at a wide range of alternative and special crops which can be grown in Alberta. Blair Roth a special crops specialist with Alberta Agriculture in Lethbridge says some 49 guest speakers from across Western Canada and North Dakota are scheduled to speak during the conference. Topics will range from considering general production and economic factors to specific workshops on crops ranging from corn/sorghum, wild rice, buckwheat, canary seed, peanuts, vegetables, fruits and potatoes, warm season pulse crops, mushrooms, forages, herbs and spices, sunflowers and cool season pulse crops. For more information or to register contact an Alberta Agriculture district office or phone Roth at 381-5124 or Tom Krahn at 362-3391.

(Cont'd)

NORTH AMERICAN FOOD IS NOT EXPENSIVE

A specialist at the University of Alberta in Edmonton says people shouldn't complain about the grocery bill as North America still has the cheapest food in the world. Dr. Fred Wolfe, chairman of the department of food science said in a recent interview that "North America enjoys the lowest percentage of disposable income paid for food in the world (14 to 16 per cent)." In an article in the Agriculture and Forestry Bulletin, Wolfe says, "In western European countries, the cost are as high as 30 to 35 per cent of disposable income and in some of the developing countries, food costs can represent as much as 95 per cent of disposable income. The reason that we have been able to maintain this very economical food supply is because of the efficiencies that are obtained in very modern food processing operations: efficiencies in energy costs, processing and waste disposal. All of these contribute to continuing benefit of low consumer prices for foods."

ALBERTA BREEDERS HOST SIMMENTAL CONVENTION

The Alberta Simmental Association will be hosting the national Simmental convention, November 11 to 13 in conjunction with Farmfair at Edmonton Northlands. In marking the 20th anniversary of the Simmental cattle breed in Canada, the association will honor some of key people who made importation of the European breed possible. Senator Dan Hays will officially open the show in honor of the late Senator Harry Hays and Dr. Ken Wells, former veterinary director of Canada, is the guest speaker at the banquet. More than 360 head of Simmental cattle from across Canada are expected at the show and 60 top animals have been consigned for the sale. For more information contact the association office in Red Deer at 346-7852.

(Cont'd)

BLOOD TEST MAY DETECT GRUB PROBLEM

Specialists at the Agriculture Canada Research Station in Lethbridge say they may have developed a blood test which can detect whether cattle are playing host to grubs and warbles. Dr. R.W. Baron, an immunologist and D.D. Colwell, a parasitologist say in a station release the blood test "shows promise". Presently animals infested with cattle grubs can only be identified in winter, when warbles appear in the backs of animals. This makes it difficult to assess the effectiveness of pesticides applied for grub control in the fall. But a new technique known as ELISA detects cattle grub antibodies in the blood of cattle. The presence of this antibody indicates a warble infestation. By monitoring the antibody levels in cattle that were artificially infested in the spring, the researchers were able to accurately identify infested animals as early as October. Preliminary work with blood samples taken from several hundred naturally infested animals confirmed the accuracy of the test. The test will be useful in checking imported cattle and in monitoring levels of cattle grubs in areas of persistent infestations and the effectiveness of various pesticide treatments. It may also allow producers to treat only those animals that are infested rather than the whole herd. More research is required to validate the test and make it easier for the producer to use before it can be commercialized.

(Not for release before October 28, 1987 - this article only)

SOCIETY CHANGES NAME

The Alberta chapter of an international organization has followed the lead of the parent body and changed its name to better reflect its mandate. The Alberta chapter of the Soil Conservation Society of America will now be known as the Alberta Chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society. The organization which was created 41 years ago recently voted to change the name to show it is also concerned about water conservation issues. The Alberta chapter, founded in 1981, has 120 members dedicated to promoting the science and art of good land and water use.

Alberta Agriculture, Print Media Branch, Phone: (403) 427-2121

AGRI-NEWS

November 2, 1987

For immediate release

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

November 2, 1987
For immediate release

Early calving key to maximum returns

The average beef producer in Alberta may discover an extra $80 to $100 of income per cow in the breeding herd by paying attention to factors which improve reproductive performance, says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

Ross Gould, head of the livestock management section of the beef cattle and sheep branch, says two key factors in maximizing returns are first, increasing the number of calves born, and second, getting more calves born early in the calving season.

He says a recent survey of beef producers shows the most profitable herds had the majority of calves born in the first three weeks of the calving season.

Gould says producers may have to review their overall beef herd management to acheive this early calving pattern.

The survey of more than 170 beef herds in central Alberta has shown that their average weaned calf crop was 81 calves per 100 cows exposed at breeding.

About 45 per cent of the calves were born in the first 21 days of the calving season. This indicates the number of cows which conceived during their first potential heat cycle in the previous breeding season, says the specialist.

The most profitable 25 herds in the survey group had about 95 calves weaned per 100 cows exposed, and from 65 to 70 per cent of these calves were born in the first three weeks of calving.

The average calf in the survey was born 31 days into the calving season, while the average calf in the more profitable herds was born 18 days after the start of calving.

Gould says The Beef Herd Management Program being developed by the branch has adopted the words GOLD MINE to suggest the key indicators of herd productivity.

(Cont'd)

Early calving key to maximum returns (cont'd)

The term GOLD MINE stands for:

G rowth - weight of weaned calves
O pen cows - a measure of fertility
L ength of calving season - a fertility indicator
D eath Loss

M anagement
IN dicator
E valuation

"An evaluation of the key management indicators from the survey of beef producers suggests two major steps to improve profits," says Gould. "First, the number of calves weaned (affected by "O"pen cows and "D"eath losses) can be improved. Second, the "L"ength of the calving season should be reduced."

Gould described an example of how early calving can improve profits.

In a herd of 100 cows weaning 81 calves weighing 520 pounds, the weight of calf weaned per cow is 421 pounds. Increasing weaned calves to 91 will increase the weaned weight per cow to 473 pounds, a difference of 52 pounds of calf per cow. At $1.05 per pound (averaged over steer and heifer calves) this amounts to an extra income of $54.60 per cow.

Reducing the "L"ength of calving season and having the average calf born at 18 days instead of 31 days after start of calving will result in heavier calves at weaning. If calves are gaining 2.2 pounds per day on pasture, the extra 13 days of age at weaning should produce an extra 28.6 pounds worth $30.03 per calf weaned.

If 91 calves are weaned per 100 cows, shortening the calving date will increase income per cow by a further $27.33. Combined with the improved number of calves weaned, the total potential for improved income is $81.93 per cow.

"This extra production is not a free lunch however," says Gould. "Nutritionists and reproduction specialists in the beef cattle and sheep branch have estimated the extra costs (in feed, facilities and veterinary bills for pregnancy checks and herdsire evaluations) to be from $25 to $35 per cow. The net difference of about $50 per cow is still probably worth the effort for most beef producers.

(Cont'd)

Early calving key to maximum returns (cont'd)

"The effort of evaluating the key management indicators in a cow-calf operation may indeed uncover a GOLD MINE in the cow herd of the average Alberta beef producer."

Beef producers looking for more detailed information on beef herd managment can find it in the "Beef Herd Management Reference Binder and Study Guide" available for $35 through the Alberta Home Study office.

Registration forms are available through Alberta Agriculture district offices.

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Contact: Ross Gould
427-5335

November 2, 1987
For immeidate release

Agriculture reference manual available

Farmers and agricultural advisors looking for a quick reference source on production and economic data information will be interested in a manual produced by Alberta Agriculture.

Doug Barlund, farm management economist with the department in Olds says the 1987 Agricultural Lenders' Manual is a reliable source of information and a good value.

Described as a lenders' manual because it was developed for use as a reference text for Alberta Agriculture's annual "Agricultural Workshop for Lenders" held each June at Olds College.

The 600-page manual contains production information and cost/returns data on at least 10 major agricultural enterprises in the province.

"It has proven useful to agricultural consultants, farm managers/owners, appraisers, accountants, landmen and agricultural students as a quick source of data that is needed to make business decisions in agriculture," says Barlund.

Copies of the manual are available for $25 each from Olds College, Extension Services, Olds, Alberta T0M 1P0 (telephone 556-8344). Cheques should be made payable to Olds College.

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Contact: Douglas E. Barlund
556-4245

November 2, 1987
For immediate release

Don't give up wild oat control measures

Alberta farmers tempted to save money by reducing wild oat control efforts are warned they could be making matters much worse, says a specialist with the Alberta Environmental Centre.

Dr. J. O'Donovan, head of the weed biology section at the Vegreville facility says neglecting wild oat control could spell disaster for the producer down the road.

"Wild oat is the most economically harmful annual grassy weed of cultivated land in Alberta," says O'Donovan. "However, due to the relatively high cost of wild oat herbicide and the recent down-turn in grain and oilseed prices, producers may be tempted to omit control measures during some year.

"In situations where wild oat populations are moderately high, greater than 10 plants per square metre, this practice can have devastating consequences. These include severe crop yield and financial losses and a dramatic increase in wild oat populations in subsequent years."

O'Donovan makes his remarks following a four-year field study conducted at the Alberta Environmental Centre. The study was conducted on three cropping systems - continuous wheat, continuous barley, and canola/barley rotation.

A wild oat infestation of about 10 plants per square metre was established in 1983. Wild oats were then either controlled each year (1983-1986), every second year (1984 and 1986), third year only (1985) fourth year only (1986), or not controlled at all.

"In all three cropping systems, wild oat control with herbicides each year was by far the most effective means of maintaining wild oat populations at low levels each year," says O'Donovan. "Omitting control during some years was most serious in the continuous wheat system where populations increased to over 200 plants per square metre by 1986.

(Cont'd)

Don't give up wild oat control measures (cont'd)

"The situation was least serious in continuous barley, and populations increased to only about 20 plants per square metre by 1986."

The specialist says in the canola/barley rotation, wild oat populations were relatively low during the barley year, but increased considerably when the less competitive canola crop was sown.

The study shows crop yield losses were very severe in wheat and canola when wild oats were not controlled. For example, in 1986 when wild oat populations were over 200 plants per square metre, wheat yield was reduced by more than 60 per cent.

"In both the continuous wheat and canola/barley systems, controlling the wild oats every year with a herbicide was the most cost-effective practice when crop yields, market prices and herbicide costs were averaged over four years," says O'Donovan.

In continuous barley, however, where yield reductions were considerably less, it was more economical to apply wild oat herbicides every second or third year rather than every year.

"The study suggests that omitting wild oat control in continuous wheat can have drastic consequences," he says. "Neglecting control in wheat/canola/wheat or wheat/wheat/canola systems should also be avoided since the competitive effects of wild oats in wheat and canola are similar.

"On the other hand, the more years that a strong competitive crop like barley is grown in a rotation, the less likelihood that severe yield and financial losses will result; or that wild oat populations will increase to unmanageable levels if control is omitted during some years."

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Contact: Dr. J. O'Donovan
632-6761

November 2, 1987
For immediate release

Deadline nears for custom operators' directory

Contractors providing custom services to Alberta farmers are reminded December 31, 1987 is the deadline to be included in Alberta Agriculture's Directory of Custom Operators.

The publication is complied by the department's farm business management branch at Olds. The directory benefits both custom operators and farmers as it lists the people and the farm service they provide.

Each year, 7,000 copies of the directory are printed and distributed in early March throughout the province.

Custom operators are required to submit their name, town, phone number and type of service provided.

Any contractors interested in being included in the 1988 directory must contact the branch before the end of the year. As well, any contractors listed in the 1987 must also resubmit their information to be included in the 1988 version.

For more information on the director contact Garth Nickorick, at branch in Olds at 556-4247.

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Contact: Garth Nickorick
556-4247

November 2, 1987
For immediate release

Peas and hog rations topic of November 19 meeting

Alberta hog and pea producers will both be interested in an afternoon seminar in Lacombe later this month which will discuss the value of field peas in hog rations.

Four specialists are scheduled to speak at the 1:15 p.m. session to be held in the Lacombe Agriculture Building, November 19.

Dan Gregorwich, of Kelsey, of the Western Hog Growers will discuss the results of 1987 pea feeding trials, while Sam Jaikaran, an animal nutritionist with Alberta Agriculture in Edmonton will talk about formulating feed rations using peas.

As well, Marvin Salomons, the department's regional swine specialist in Red Deer, will discuss calculating pea values by computer, and Neil Miller, district agriculturist in Lacombe will review a home worksheet for calculating pea values.

The free one-afternoon seminar is sponsored by the Alberta Pulse Growers, the Western Hog Growers and Alberta Agriculture.

For more information contact the Lacombe district office at 782-3301.

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Contact: Neil Miller
782-3301

November 2, 1987
For immediate release

Hog production worth $270 million to Alberta

Alberta's pork production in the last 25 years has followed a trend established across Canada and the United States of fewer producers raising more pigs, according to a recently released Alberta Agriculture publication.

Census figures show the number of Alberta farms reporting pigs dropped from more than 40,000 farms in 1961 to 6,538 farms in 1986.

And the report also shows that specialized operations are producing most of the hogs in the province.

"More than 60 per cent of Alberta's hogs are sold by producers marketing 1,001 or more hogs and these producers make up nine per cent of those raising hogs," says the report.

The overview - "Alberta's Pork Production Industry" - shows that Alberta farmers marketed an estimated 1,935,071 hogs in 1986, representing about 13.5 per cent of total hog production in Canada.

Hog production contributed $270 million to total farm cash receipts in 1986, which was 7.0 per cent of farm cash income in Alberta.

It has been estimated that a dollar of income from hog production generates at least $2 in income in other industries and perhaps as much as $6, says the publication.

Looking at the production distribution across the province, the report says the largest concentration of hog production was in the Red Deer/Lacombe district. The province was divided into 15 census districts.

The report also shows how hog production levels within the districts changed over the previous year.

(Cont'd)

Hog production worth $270 million to Alberta (cont'd)

Comparing 1985 and 1986 hog population figures there was "an upward trend in the southern districts, which account for 22.4 per cent of the provincial total; a slight decline in the four central districts, which account for 39.4 per cent of the province's hogs; a slight decline in the northeast districts with 24.3 per cent; and a small increase in the northwest sector with 13.9 per cent."

For a copy of the full three-page report - "Alberta's Pork Production Industry" - (Catalogue number Agdex 440/00-1) contact an Alberta Agriculture district office or write Alberta Agriculture, Publications Office, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

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Contact: Fred Schuld
427-5320

November 2, 1987
For immediate release

Former Alberta 4-H members earn dairy scholarships

A brother and sister from Crossfield, Alberta were named winners this year of $6,000 in scholarships awarded by the Alberta Dairy Association and Alberta Agriculture.

Mark and Maxine Cameron, former Alberta 4-H members, each will receive $3,000 toward continuing their education at the University of Illinois.

This is the fifth time that Mark has won this scholarship and only the first time for Maxine, says Marvyn Molzan of Leduc, second vice-president of the Alberta Dairy Association and chairman of the association's producer section.

"It is only a coincidence that a brother and sister should win, but the association is pleased to make the award to these two outstanding young Albertans," he says.

The award which is presented annually goes to applicants who are continuing post graduate studies in dairy husbandry, have good scholastic records, and who preferably have 4-H experience and a farm background.

Mark and Maxine were raised on a dairy farm owned by their parents, Bill and Shirley Cameron, at Crossfield. They have been long time members of the CDC (Crossfield/Didsbury/Carstairs) 4-H Dairy Club.

This year, Mark is beginning his first year of doctoral studies in dairy ruminant nutrition, while Maxine is in her first year of a master's program in animal nutrition at the University of Illinois in Champagne, Urbana.

Their parents praised the Alberta 4-H program for helping them with their careers.

"Their 4-H background has helped put them where they are today," says Mrs. Cameron. "Especially public speaking; they have no problem speaking to large audiences."

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Contact: Marvyn Molzan 986-2417
Bob Coe 422-4444

November 2, 1987
For immediate release

Corey Loessin joins Thorhild office

A Saskatchewan native who has spent the past 18 months working for Alberta Agriculture in Innisfail has been named the new district agriculturist in Thorhild, a community north of Edmonton.

Corey Loessin, who joined the department in 1986 was named to fill the vacancy created earlier this year by the transfer of Bob Drysdale to the district office in Calgary.

The announcement of Loessin's appointment was made by John Tackaberry, director of the department's northwest region, headquartered in Barrhead.

Born and raised on a grain and livestock farm near Radisson, Saskatchewan, Loessin graduated from the University of Saskatchewan in 1986 with a bachelor of science degree in agriculture, majoring in agricultural engineering and crop science.

He began his career with the department as a training district agriculturist in Innisfail, where he worked 18 months with district agriculturist Ted Darling.

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Contact: Corey Loessin
398-3993

Agri-News Briefs

BOOKLET SETS OUT STATUTORY FREIGHT RATES

Farmers and other agri-businessmen interested in the rates for shipping grain by rail from any point in Alberta to ports in BC and Ontario should obtain a copy of the "Statutory Grain Freight Rates" for the 1987-88 crop year. The 22-page booklet, produced by Alberta Agriculture and Alberta Economic Development and Trade is a straightforward directory of the costs in rail shipment from any point in Alberta to Vancouver, Prince George or Thunder Bay, by either CN or CP Rail. The book shows the distance in mileage, the total freight per tonne, the federal government share of the cost, the Western Grain Transportation Act producer share, and the net producer share. For a free copy of the booklet (Catalogue number Agdex 843-4) contact an Alberta Agriculture district office or write Alberta Agriculture, Publications Office, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

SEED GROWERS TO MEET IN BANFF

Alberta members of the Canadian Seed Growers are planning their 1988 convention at the Banff Park Lodge, January 6, 7 and 8. The Alberta branch, which represents about 1,100 growers in the province, will review some of the major changes affecting the industry in 1987 and discuss trends expected in 1988. For more information on the conference contact secretary Bill Witbeck in Lacombe at 782-4641.

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Agri-News Briefs (cont'd)

FINANCIAL STRUCTURE AFFECTS EARNING PERFORMANCE

The capital or financial structure of a farm operation has direct impact on the earning performance of the operation, say farm financial specialists. Debt load, variable interest rates and falling asset values are all factors which have an influence. And not much has been written about exactly how these various influences interact to determine a farm business' financial performance. An Alberta Agriculture publication "How Capital Structure Affects Earning Performance" is available to provide producers with a clear understanding of these financial interrelationships. The four-page publication has two objectives: first to explain the relationship between capital structure and earning performance, and second to illustrate these relationships by considering the performance of three farm businesses from 1980 to 1984. Craig Edwards, a farm management economist with the farm business management branch in Olds, says a "more complete understanding of the implications of debt financing may help to avoid some of the problems presently being experienced by some farm businesses today." For a copy of the report (Agdex FS830-1) contact any Alberta Agriculture district office or write Alberta Agriculture, Publications Office, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

PUBLICATIONS ASSIST WITH PET CARE PROBLEMS

Dog owners concerned that the family pet or working cowdog or sheepdog may have problems with worms should obtain two publications available from Alberta Agriculture. "Tapeworms in Dogs" and "Hookworms in Dogs" describe the lifecycle of the pests, explain the harm they can do, how a dog can contract the pests, and how worms can be controlled. For a copy of the publications (Tapeworms Agdex #655-2, Hookworms Agdex #655-4) contact an Alberta Agriculture district office or write Alberta Agriculture, Publications Office, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

(Cont'd)

Agri-News Briefs (cont'd)

POULTRY FEATURED IN CALGARY

Alberta's poultry industry will be showcased in early December at the 73rd annual Alberta Provincial Poultry Show in Calgary. Producers and poultry industry representatives from across the province will be part of the December 4 to 6 show at the main pavilion at the Stampede Grounds. For more information on the event contact Ed Demmers, Calgary, at 229-6063 or Victor Won, Calgary, at 279-4440.

CONSERVATION TILLAGE ENVIRONMENTALLY AND ECONOMICALLY SOUND

From all aspects conservation tillage practices are of value to Alberta farmers, say provincial conservation specialists. While it is vital to protect and improve the soil resource, they say farmers are also finding the concept is economical as well. "The viability of agriculture depends to a major extent on the productive quality of agricultural soils," says a new publication from Alberta Agriculture. "Recent studies and events have clearly demonstrated how susceptible our soils are to wind and water erosion, to a decline in organic matter content to salinization...A farmer has societal, moral and ethical obligations to see that the soil resource is managed so that all present and future members of society may benefit. Conservation tillage is a step toward soil conservation. However because more of the agricultural land is privately owned by farmers, the primary motivation for conservation tillage is economic. Fortunately farmers are realising economic benefits from the adoption of conservation tillage systems." For a copy of the full four-page report (Agdex 516-3) which describes some of the basic principles and concepts of conservation tillage contact an Alberta Agriculture district office or write Alberta Agriculture, Publications Office, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

Alberta Agriculture, Print Media Branch, Phone: (403) 427-2121

AGRI-NEWS

November 9, 1987

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November 9, 1987
For immediate release

Trade agreement provides safeguards to producers

Western farmers and food processors, along with the general Canadian economy, will benefit from the recently forged Canada/U.S. "Free Trade" deal, says a trade specialist with Alberta Agriculture.

Dr. Joe Rosario, executive director of the department's trade policy secretariat in Edmonton, says the agreement will generally provide Alberta's agricultural products with improved access to U.S. markets.

And at the same time, Rosario says the agreement also safeguards Canadian agriculture from being flooded by U.S. livestock, grains and other commodities.

"It is not everything that was hoped for, but it will provide a much better system than what we had before," he says after reviewing the October 5 pact. "In agriculture, we would have liked to have seen a more rigorous dispute settlement mechanism, and perhaps seen the agreement deal with issues such as interprovincial trade, but there wasn't time to discuss all points before the deadline.

"But at least we have the framework to look at these issues and work out the details over the next few years."

The trade specialist says the agreement begins a process of improving trade access to the United States. Road blocks such as tariffs, customs practices, product standards, and direct and indirect subsidies, affecting movement of many products, will either be redesigned, removed, or phased out under terms of the agreement.

The deal will create a closer relationship between Canada and the U.S. on trade matters which could lead to a more unified approach for the two countries in dealing with other trading partners.

Rosario says Alberta producers and food processors may see changes in market access as early as 1989. Smaller hurdles will be eliminated first, while the larger issues will be dealt with over the next few years.

(Cont'd)

Trade agreement provides safeguards to producers (cont'd)

He says the agreement creates a level playing field for the movement of agricultural products between the two countries. It will eliminate Canadian features such as the Western Grain Transportation Act benefit on products moving through west coast ports to the U.S. and import licences for grains and products when support levels in both countries converge. Ultimately this will create more stability in export markets.

"I can't see any area of Canadian agriculture which is threatened by this agreement," he says. "For Western Canada there is much greater scope for development of north/south trade with the United States than there is for east/west trade to eastern Canada.

"The agreement makes it possible for us to exploit market opportunities particularly in the western United States. We need certain commodities from them such as fruit and vegetables, but they are deficient in many other agricultural products which we can supply."

The trade specialist says the agreement creates a new trading climate which should avoid confrontations over the sale of commodities across the border such as recent disputes over softwood lumber, corn and potash. He says the agreement however does not supercede the trade laws which exist within the two countries.

Rosario says it will still take several years to work out the ground rules affecting all commodities and implement all aspects of the agreement.

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Contact: Dr. Joe Rosario - Nithi Govindasamy
427-2637

November 9, 1987
For immediate release

Bi-national panel to review trade disputes

A bi-national panel representing both Canada and the United States will be struck to settle trade disputes between the countries according to the terms of the comprehensive free-trade agreement.

A trade specialist with Alberta Agriculture says while a "more rigorous dispute settlement mechanism" was preferred, the panel is a major step forward.

"In the past there was no way to appeal the application of U.S. law in any trade matters," says Dr. Joe Rosario, executive director of the department's trade policy secretariat. "If we felt an action by the U.S. was detrimental to our industry, there was no recourse. Their ruling was final. Now under the terms of the agreement there is a way to defuse trade irritants before they cause major disputes."

Rosario says the panel will have responsibility in three major areas of trade. It will look at problems associated with "countervail" and "anti-dumping" measures, it will look at the trades and services area, and it will look at safeguards and determine what constitutes fair and unfair trade practices.

He says the panel will be effective in dealing with arbitrary decisions and political policy which may adversely affect trade. More detailed guidelines on what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable trade practices will be developed over the next few years.

"It was impossible for the general agreement to cover all areas where problems could develop, particularly in agriculture. The panel allows for disputes to be resolved while the details are worked out."

Rosario says the prime benefit to Alberta and western Canada farmers is to make U.S. markets more accessible.

(Cont'd)

The livestock industry, for example, will see tariffs removed or phased out. Lighter tariffs on commodities such as boxed beef and specialty meats may be removed as early as 1989, while heavier tariffs such as those imposed on processed meat products will be phased out over the next five to 10 years.

The free-trade agreement also addresses issues such as product standards and customs practices. Rosario says if the two countries can agree on standards for agricultural products it removes the risk of a Canadian product being turned back at the U.S. border because it doesn't meet U.S. standards.

As well, uniform product standards could also eliminate extra inspections. If a Canadian product passes quality inspection in this country, there would be no need for a further inspection at the border.

Referring to products under supply management, Rosario says the agreement sets a ceiling on the amount of products that can be imported from the United States.

Using, eggs and poultry as an example, he says the import ceiling is an average of the amount imported annually over the last five years plus the usual supplementary amount. The agreement combines the two figures to establish the new ceiling.

"Really it takes what has been traditionally happening and puts it into black and white," he says.

In the grains and oilseeds area, Rosario says under the terms of the agreement subsidies which apply to grains shipped to the United States will be removed.

He says the free/trade pact ensures that neither country uses transportation or other direct subsidies to influence grain prices.

"This will force us to remove the Western Grain Transportation Act benefit on grains and products shipped to U.S. markets and this will no doubt have some impact on margins," says Rosario. "But the U.S. is an expanding market providing Canada expanded trade opportunities. And as it stands now we already truck a great deal of grain across the border, which will not be affected."

(Cont'd)

Bi-national panel to review trade disputes (cont'd)

"In the grains area the agreement also will not limit grain export from the U.S. into Canada. Import licensing will be eliminated as soon as support levels in both countries converge."

The policy advisor says the measures are intended to remove outside factors which influence grain prices.

"The entire thrust will be to make grain prices responsive to what the market determines rather than to what institutions determine," he says. "By eliminating direct transportation subsidies and making sure any other indirect subsidies are equal on both sides of the border, prices will be market orientated. We will move away from an artificial situation and have a much truer picture of demands and prices."

The specialist says that Alberta's food processing industry will also see some changes.

"Compared to the U.S. our processing industries generally have a disadvantage because of higher input costs. As an example, companies using flour face higher costs because of policies such as the two-price system for wheat and barley, which now has the price of grain used for domestic purposes higher than the price of export grain.

"To keep them competitive with U.S. companies the two price system will have to go. Of course it wouldn't be fair to let producers bear the cost of this change, so a means of paying a differential to producers will have to be devised."

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Contact: Dr. Joe Rosario - Nithi Govindasamy
427-2637

November 9, 1987
For immediate release

Seminars to review tax reform for farmers

Farmers in the northwest agricultural region around Edmonton concerned about the impact of federal tax reform proposals should attend one of three seminars planned for late November and early December.

Organized by Alberta Agriculture, the sessions are open to all producers in the region which runs from Drayton Valley to Athabasca and from Sangudo to Thorhild. The meetings will explain the highlights of the white paper on tax reform released June 18 by Federal Finance Minister Michael Wilson.

Merle Good, Alberta Agriculture's farm tax specialist from Olds will lead the discussion during the three sessions, planned for November 24 in Josephburg, November 25 in Westlock, and December 7 in Evansburg.

Good says one of the major recommendations in the package involves an overhaul of the present accounting and tax systems for farmers.

Bob Winchell, the department's regional farm management economist in Barrhead, says producers and other industry representatives interested in what these changes could mean should pre-register for the seminars by calling one of the participating Alberta Agriculture district offices.

Winchell says each seminar will cover similar ground including tax reform and property transfers, changes in capital gains; tax reform and calculating farm income, accrual accounting for farmers; tax reform and farm losses, "Am I a farmer or not?; and other tax reform issues such as five year block averaging, taxation of quotas and purebred cattle.

Farmers in and around Strathcona County should pre-register by November 20 for the seminar to be held at the Moyer Recreational Centre in Josephburg, November 24.

There is a $5 fee for the session which runs from 1 to 4 p.m. To register call the Fort Saskatchewan district office at 998-0190.

Good will receive assistance from Brock Allison of the accounting firm Delloitte Haskins and Sells at the November 25 seminar at the Westlock Inn.

(Cont'd)

Seminars to review tax reform for farmers (cont'd)

There is a $10 registration fee for the session which runs from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. The fee includes the cost of coffee and dinner. To register call the Westlock office at 349-4465 before November 20.

Bill Daye of the accounting firm of Peat Marwick and Mitchell will join Good December 7 at the final seminar in Evansburg. Again the $10 registration fee for this session running from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. includes coffee and dinner.

To pre-register call the Evansburg district office at 727-3673 by November 27.

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Contact: Bob Winchell
674-8253

November 9, 1987
For immediate release

Study creates average farm family profile

A province-wide study of 318 Alberta farm households in 1986 creates an interesting profile of the average farm family.

The joint Alberta Agriculture and University of Alberta FAMEX (FAMily EXpenditure) Study paints a picture of a farm couple in their late 30's, as part of a household of 4.25 people. They have a relatively good education, and about 13 years farming experience.

The FAMEX study asked participating families to keep detailed records of their household spending habits for a year. The study concept was created in 1983 by Stettler district home economist Kay Dean who launched a small project in her area. The idea was expanded in a similar Vermilion region study in 1985, that lead to the province-wide study, funded by Farming for the Future, in 1986.

The study authors note that averages are only averages and the "mean " figures are not intended to fit every situation. They do say the study conclusion that it costs an average of about $24,000 a year to run a farm household is a sound reference point.

Response to the 1986 FAMEX study was fairly even across the province with about 50 farm families in each of the six agricultural regions headquartered in Lethbridge, Airdrie, Red Deer, Vermilion, Barrhead and Fairview, participating.

So what does a FAMEX family look like? According to study averages the wife is 38 years old, while the husband is about 41. They have been farming for 13.6 years and live in a 1,374 square foot home that is 24 years old. They own about 937 acres, but actually farm about 1,490 acres, representing both deeded and rented land.

About 38 per cent of the female householders and 36 per cent of the male householders in the FAMEX study have at least a high school education. About 28 and 32 per cent respectively have post-secondary education, and 27 and 12 per cent, respectively, have university education.

(Cont'd)

Study creates average farm family profile (cont'd)

Again looking at averages, gross farm sales for a FAMEX family was $107,778 a year, with net farm income at $20,035. Wives earned about $7,300 a year in off-farm income, while husbands earned about $11,200 a year in off-farm income.

The average total family income, which includes net farm income and all sources of off-farm income, was calculated at $26,448 a year.

As well the study showed that income-in-kind, the value of home grown meat and vegetable products consumed by the family, was worth about $1,447 a year.

Looking at the structure of the farm business about 35 per cent of FAMEX families said the farm was owned by sole proprietorship; 45.6 per cent had an unwritten partnership; 11.3 per cent had a formal partnership; 5.3 per cent had a family corporation; and 2.5 per cent had some other arrangement or no response.

For more information or a copy of the FAMEX study contact any district home economist or Alberta Agriculture, Home Economics Branch, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

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Contact: Jean Wilson - Shirley Myers
427-2412

November 9, 1987
For immediate release

Most families plan to keep records

About half the families participating in a provincial study of farm household expenses say they didn't think they spent as much as the figures show.

About 47.8 per cent of the 318 participating families were surprised by the year-end total. Most people had underestimated their household costs by about $5,000 a year.

The FAMEX (FAMily EXpenditure) study conducted by Alberta Agriculture and University of Alberta in 1986 showed on average a farm family spends nearly $24,000 a year to run the household. About 45 per cent of participants say they spent as expected.

In a recently released report on the study most participants said they would continue to keep records even though the study is complete.

"Reaction from the FAMEX families to the exercise of keeping family records was generally positive," says the report. "At the beginning of the study 83 participants said they seldom or never kept family accounts, while 119 said they always did. At the end of the year 263 of the 318 said they would keep records again."

FAMEX families say anyone planning to keep track of family expenditures should remember the following considerations:

- the separation of farm business and household expenses;
- the treatment of savings and investments;
- how the family's financial security is being taken care of;
- how off-farm employment affects expenditure patterns; and
- what the family's goal and priorities are, for themselves and for the farm business.

"It is especially important, when farm businesses are under pressure financially to make as much of a separation as possible between the business and the household for the sake of making economic decisions," says the report.

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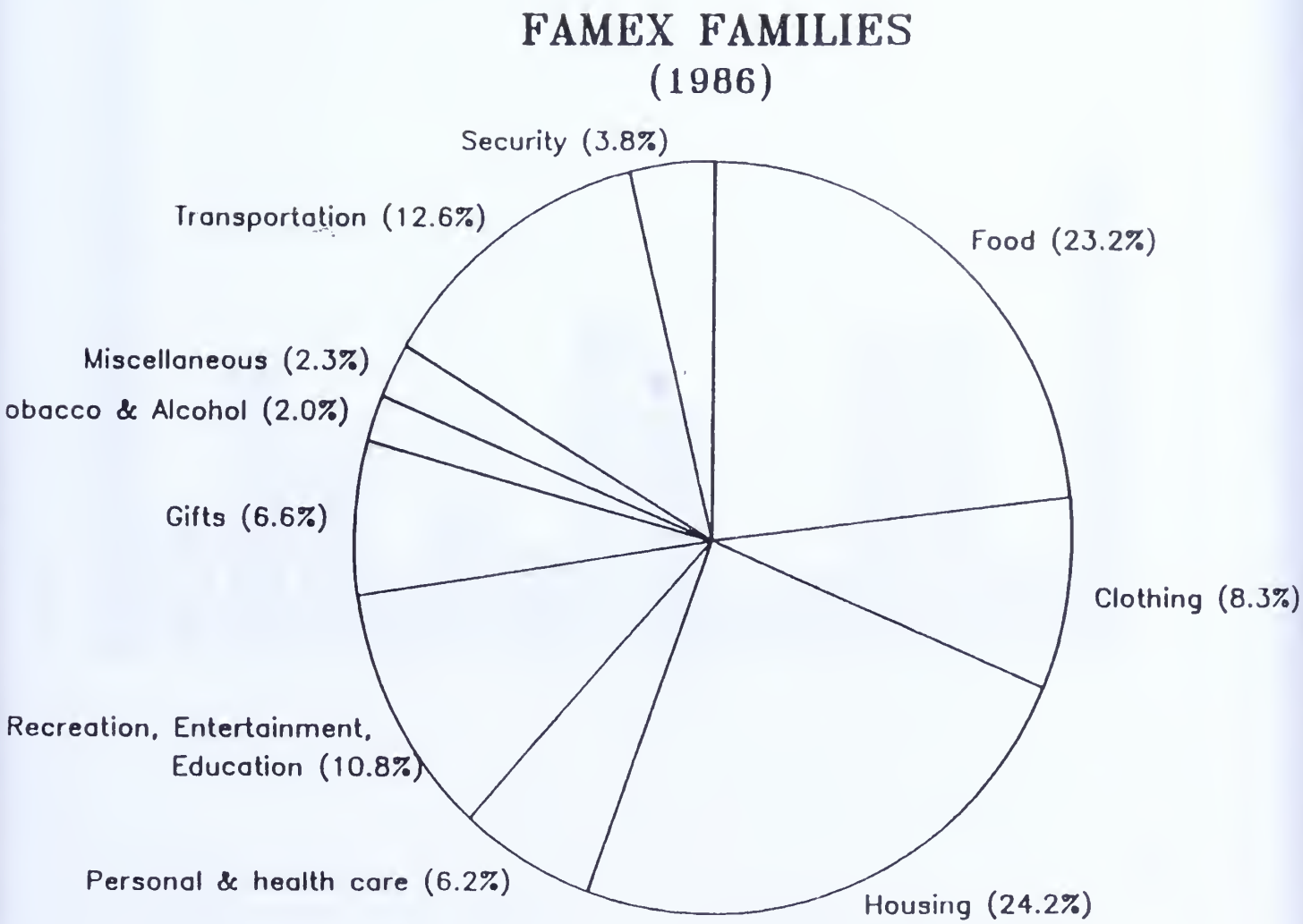

Pie graph shows what per cent of income is spent on the major categories of expenses.

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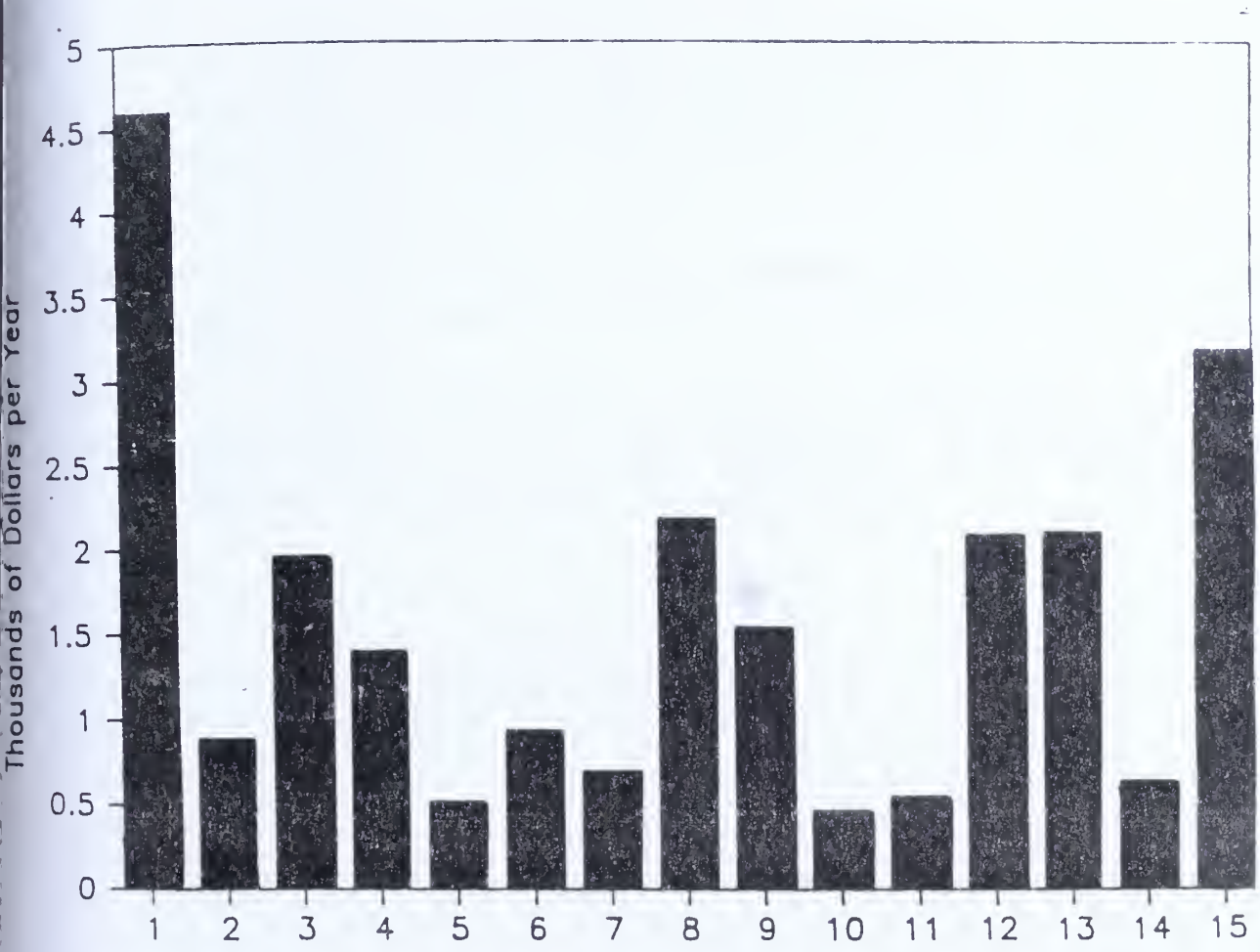
Graph shows break down of expenditures by category
from 1986 FAMEX Study



1. Food at home
2. Meals away from home
3. Clothing
4. Household operation
5. Personal care
6. Medical and health
7. Household furnishings, equip.
8. Rec., entertainment, educ.
9. Gifts
10. Tobacco & alcohol
11. Miscellaneous
12. Shelter
13. Transportation
14. Security
15. Capital Exp.

(Cont'd)

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Most families plan to keep records (cont'd)

"Making such distinctions in no way implies that a way of life has to change or that non-financial goals and priorities are unimportant: on the contrary, the process can clarify the farm family's position and enable it to make clear-headed decisions that increase the family's chances of reaching its goals."

As one participant remarked: "Keeping records helped us realize we weren't always spending on what was important to us. We can now make some changes."

For more information or a copy of the FAMEX study contact any district home economist or Alberta Agriculture, Home Economics Branch, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

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Contact: Jean Wilson - Shirley Myers
427-2412

November 9, 1987
For immediate release

Producers urged to complete honey production survey

Alberta beekeepers are urged to complete and return a survey which should confirm predictions that 1987 was one of the best honey production years on record.

While the recently distributed questionnaire will tell the story, an Alberta Agriculture specialist estimates that the 1987 honey crop will be about 25.5 million pounds, which is just below the record.

"If estimates are achieved, this would represent the second highest crop on record and would exceed 1986 production by almost six per cent," says Michael Adam, a statistician with the statistics branch in Edmonton.

"We are asking producers to return the survey as soon as possible to enable an early analysis and release of the results."

The provincial record was set in 1984 with production of more than 27.5 million pounds. Looking over the last three seasons, yields have rebounded from a poor harvest of only 18.5 million pounds in 1985, to 24 million pounds in 1986.

The statistics branch keeps track of honey production through two annual surveys.

The branch conducts a survey of Alberta beekeepers each summer, in co-operation with Statistics Canada, to obtain a preliminary indication of honey production. Actual production levels will be estimated from the second survey this fall. Questionnaires have already been mailed out.

"This year, as in past years, response to the summer survey exceeded 30 per cent of the number of beekeepers who were contacted," says the specialist. "This made it possible to forecast honey production and to estimate the number of producers and producing colonies."

Adam says sub-provincial forecasts showed potential for a major increase over 1986 production in the Peace River region because of an expected increase in yield and more producing colonies.

"Traditionally the leading honey producing area, this year's production in the Peace should easily surpass one half of the total provincial crop," he says.

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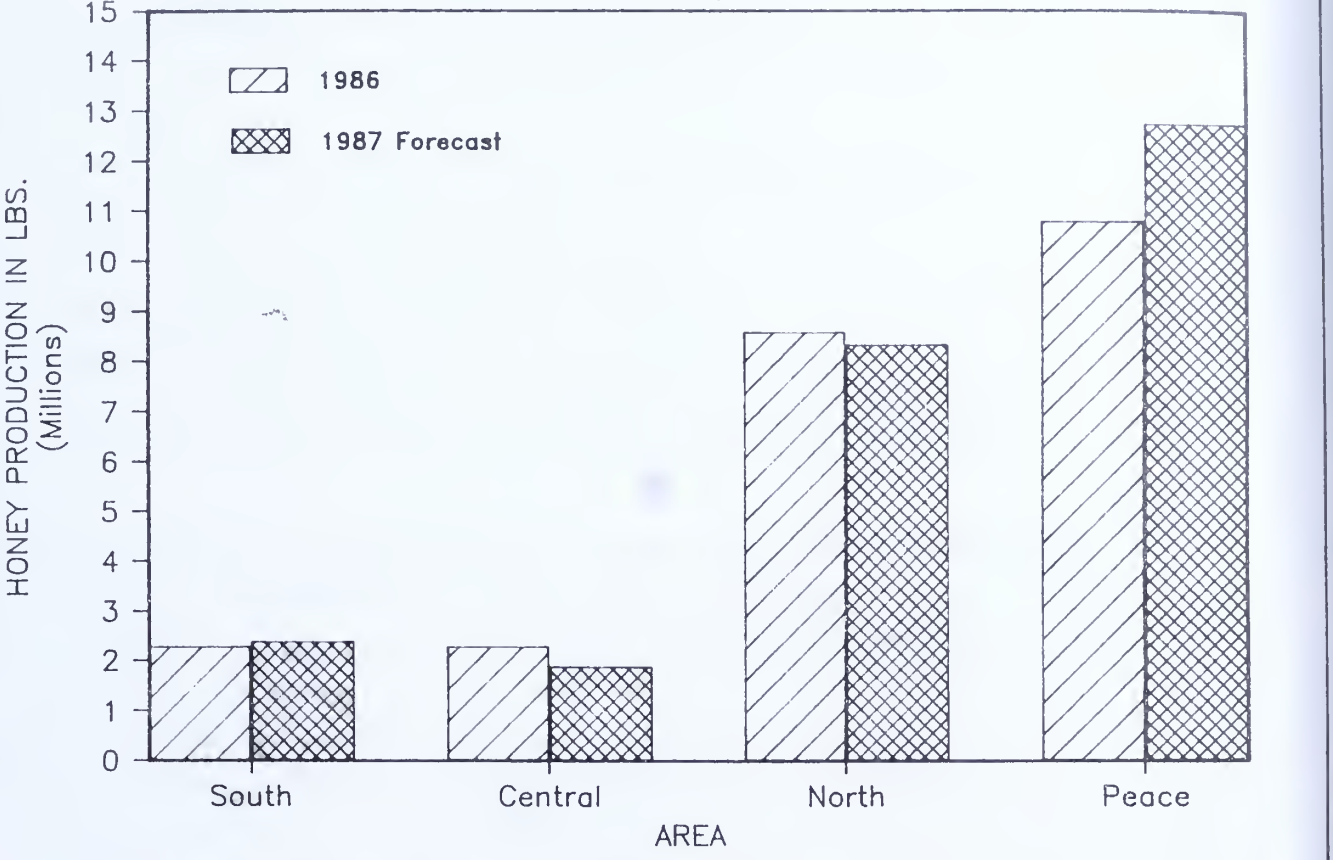

Graph compares 1986 honey production with 1987 production forecast.

For more information on the summer survey contact Statistics Branch, Alberta Agriculture, 302 J.G. O'Donoghue Building, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

Contact: Michael Adam
427-4011

November 9, 1987
For immediate release

New district home economist named in Hanna

A six-year member of the Alberta Agriculture staff who has worked in several southern Alberta locations has been named the new district home economist in Hanna.

Laura Lee Billings, who most recently served the department as the DHE in Airdrie, has transferred to Hanna to fill the vacancy created by the retirement earlier this year of Shirley Urquhart.

Announcement of Billings' appointment was made by regional home economist Louise Starling in Airdrie.

The DHE joined the department in 1981 after graduating from the University of Alberta with a bachelor of science degree in household economics.

Billings received her DHE training in Lethbridge, before moving to the district office in Coronation for three years. A native of Delburne, Alberta, a community east of Red Deer, Billings transferred to the Airdrie district office in 1984.

Although the DHE will provide a wide range of service and information to Hanna district farm families, she has a special interest in the program area, farm financial management.

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Contact: Louise Starling 948-8502
Laura Lee Billings 854-4451

November 9, 1987
For immediate release

Alberta Wheat Pool marks a 40th anniversary

A long-time supporter of various Alberta 4-H programs, the Alberta Wheat Pool will mark an anniversary as sponsor of one 4-H event, later this month.

For the 40th year the Wheat Pool will host the send-off banquet which launches senior 4-H members from across Alberta on their way to the National 4-H Conference in Toronto.

The Wheat Pool began its sponsorship of the dinner in 1947. November 17, eight senior 4-H members, their parents and club leaders will be guests at the 1987 dinner at the Sheraton Cavalier Hotel in Calgary.

Among the special guests expected at the event are Bud McBride of Benalto, who was a member of the group attending the first send off banquet in 1947, and Alberta Wheat Pool officials. McBride, who will be guest speaker at the banquet, is still very active in 4-H work.

Also participating in the dinner, for the seventh year, will be Alberta delegates selected to attend the National 4-H Volunteer Leaders Conference also being held in Toronto.

Marguerite Stark, a 4-H program spokesman in Airdrie says Alberta Wheat Pool has been a supporter of Alberta 4-H events for 57 years. Along with staff time, the company donates about $30,000 a year to 4-H projects.

Originally the send-off dinner was a prelude to an event known as the National 4-H Judging Contest. That name was later changed to the National 4-H Conference. Eight senior 4-H members from each province are selected annually to attend the event which is sponsored by the Canadian 4-H Council.

Stark, noting Alberta delegates are named at the Selections program held annually in Olds, says being named to attend the conference is one of the major awards of the 4-H program.

(Cont'd)

Alberta Wheat Pool marks a 40th anniversary (cont'd)

Representing Alberta at the conference this year will be senior 4-H members, Kristina Anderson of Rocky Mountain House, Lorraine Cox of Camrose, Denise Crisp of Monitor, Cheryl Goodwin of Sundre, Gwen Gusella of Carstairs, Shari Hanson of Airdrie, Bill Jansen of Red Deer and Darryl Langille of Rosalind.

The five Alberta 4-H volunteer leaders attending their Toronto conference include Alberta Vigen of Coronation, Dianne Crisp of Monitor, Georges Trenson of Rimbey, Dixie Hodgson of Bowden and Bob Boulton of Lousana.

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Contact: Marguerite Stark
948-8510

November 9, 1987
For immediate release

Plant growth regulator registered

A plant growth regulator for use in commercial agriculture has been registered by Agriculture Canada.

The federal department has registered "Nitrozyme", which is a brand name of a non-toxic growth regulator marketed by Agri-Growth Technology Inc., an Edmonton company.

Nitrozyme, a product derived from marine algae, is registered as an aid to plant growth. The product is marketed in a concentrate form. Testing to date for purposes of registration has shown Nitrozyme has potential to improve yield of some crops.

Testing and evaluation studies are planned jointly with Alberta Agriculture for various Alberta sites during 1988, subsequent to laboratory and growth chamber studies conducted this winter.

The product contains natural cytokinins - plant hormones which elicit certain growth and development responses in plants.

Applied as a foliar spray, the product was originally licensed by Agriculture Canada for use on potato crops, but the registration was extended this year to include wheat, barley and canola crops.

The Nitrozyme label states that it is recommended only for use as a supplementary source of plant nutrients to a basic fertilizer program that relates to the fertility level of the soil.

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Agri-News Briefs

WHEAT CONSUMPTION MAY EXCEED PRODUCTION

World wheat supply/demand estimates for 1987/88 provide the first positive news for the wheat market in several years, says an Alberta Agriculture specialist. In his quarterly report on wheat, feedgrains and oilseeds, market analyst Charlie Pearson says estimates by the U.S. department of agriculture indicate world wheat usage will exceed production for the first time since the 1980-81 crop year. The draw-down of world wheat stocks is good news for Canadian wheat producers. Pearson says Canadian wheat production in 1987 is estimated by Statistics Canada to be 26.1 million tonnes, a 17 per cent decrease from last year's record 31.4 million tonne crop. For more information on the wheat outlook contact Pearson at 427-5386 in Edmonton.

EDMONTON-AREA STUDENTS WIN 4-H SCHOLARSHIPS

Two young women, from communities west of Edmonton have won $1,000 scholarships presented through the Alberta 4-H program. Angel Roberts, of Barrhead and Shelly Werenka of Sangudo have been named winners of the Pennington Memorial Scholarship. Roberts is in her first year of pre-veterinary studies at Grande Prairie Regional College, while Werenka is in her first year of a bachelor of science program in agriculture at the University of Alberta in Edmonton. They are among some three dozen Alberta young people who this year are sharing about $28,000 in 4-H scholarships. More than 40 senior 4-H members have received the Pennington Memorial Scholarship since it began 23 years ago.

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WIND EROSION THEME OF DECEMBER WORKSHOP

Emphasizing the fact that soil conservation is everybody's business, county and municipal district councillors, agricultural service board members, farmers and urban residents from across Alberta, concerned about the impact of wind erosion, are invited to a one day seminar and workshop at the Lethbridge Lodge Hotel, December 8. Several speakers ranging from farmers to soil conservation specialists and ag service board fieldmen will be participating in the Wind Erosion Seminar/Workshop sponsored by the Alberta chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society. The two-fold objectives of the session, which runs from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. is to increase awareness of wind erosion in Alberta among a broad range of people, and provide an opportunity to share ideas that deal with wind erosion problems. These are ideas and initiatives that can be implemented at the local level by municipal governments. By registering before December 3, the $15 registration fee will include lunch. An extra $5 meal charge, will be levied for late registrations. For more information on the seminar contact John Timmermans in Airdrie at 948-8539. To register contact Graeme Greenlee in Lethbridge at 381-5174.

OIL ANALYSIS CAN BE TELLING

Having a sample of engine oil analyzed can be an effective preventative maintenance tool says Alberta Agriculture specialists. The analyses can often tell farmers if there is a problem brewing in the machinery or equipment. They also recommend oil samples from hydraulic systems, transmissions, gear boxes, differentials and other lubricated systems, where combustion does not take place, should be analyzed on a routine basis. "Having oil samples analyzed on a regular scheduled basis can be a very effective method of monitoring the condition of machinery and equipment components, in turn providing early warning of potential failures," says an Alberta Agriculture publication. "Early warning of impending failures can reduce the high cost of major overhauls by thousands of dollars. In fact, a recent North American survey to determine the value of oil analysis, indicated that a well prepared oil analysis program will provide a return on investment of well over 80 per cent." For a copy of Lube Note #8 (Agdex 763-8) contact an Alberta Agriculture district office or write Alberta Agriculture, Publications Office, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

(Cont'd)

FEEDGRAIN PRICES EXPECTED TO DROP

Although Canadian barley production this year is down from last year's record production, market analysts still expect a large surplus of feedgrains at the end of 1987/88 crop year. Alberta Agriculture specialist Charlie Pearson, in his quarterly report says the world-wide oversupply is keeping barley prices at "extremely depressed levels." "Elevator bids for Alberta barley have ranged from $45 to $52 per tonne through October," he says. "Feedlot and feedmill prices over the same period have ranged from $50 to $65. Non-board prices are expected to weaken into the winter and early spring. Current prices are finding strength from farmers' reluctance to sell at the current price levels. We expect prices to drift lower during the winter and early spring." For more information on the feedgrain situation contact Pearson at 427-5386 in Edmonton.

SAINFOIN FOR BLOAT SAFETY

Cattlemen looking for a forage crop that has a low risk of causing bloat in livestock should consider a long-standing forage variety known as Sainfoin. Specialists at the Agriculture Canada research station at Lethbridge say the legume can be grown on either dry or irrigated cropland. "Sainfoin is a forage legume that has been recommended for hay, pasture, and seed production in Alberta for nearly 20 years, but it has never been widely grown in the province," says Dr. M.R. Hanna, a forage breeder. "Unlike alfalfa, clovers and most other forage legumes, sainfoin does not cause bloat, so it can be grazed safely by livestock. It provides palatable and highly nutritious forage, either as hay or pasture. Sainfoin is relatively free of serious disease or insect problems and is immune to alfalfa weevil." Hanna says the crop is best adapted to Brown and Dark Brown soils and has done particularly well in the Consort-Coronation area in east central Alberta and along the foothills south of Calgary to the U.S. border. The best variety available is Nova which was developed at the Lethbridge station and licenced in 1980. For more information on sainfoin, contact Dr. Hanna at 327-4561.

(Cont'd)

Agri-News Briefs (cont'd)

CANOLA PRICES MAY INCREASE OVER WINTER

With canola prices improving as the industry heads into fall, market analysts expect prices will continue the upward trend through till spring. Elevator and crusher bids for 1 CR Canbola are expected to remain in the $210 to $225 per tonne range this fall, says Charlie Pearson, Alberta Agriculture's grain market analyst in Edmonton. "We expect prices to improve during the winter and early spring. Prices on the June futures contract are expected to achieve $290 to $300 per tonne by early spring." With demand remaining fairly strong the specialist "expects basis levels to narrow this spring to the $35 to $40 per tonne range from current levels of $42 to $46 per tonne. This would result in cash elevator and crusher prices in the area of $250 to $265 per tonne." Canadian canola production is estimated by Statistics Canada to be 3.72 million tonnes this year, down 90,000 tonnes from 1986. A lower canola yield is the main factor in this decline. Pearson says this year's average yield is estimated to be 24.9 bushels per acre, down from last year's 25.7 bushels per acre average, but still well above the five year average of 22 bushels per acre. Canadian canola seeded acreage is estimated to be 6.6 million acres, up slightly from last year. For more information on oilseed markets contact Pearson at 427-5386.

Editor's Note

Attached is the most up-to-date list of preconditioned calf sales planned for Alberta this fall. These auctions are specifically designed to handle calves that have been processed under the Alberta Certified Preconditioned Feeder Program. For more information on the program contact the local auction mart or any Alberta Agriculture district office.

1987 ALBERTA PRECONDITIONED CALF SALES

(Dates set as of October 26, 1987)

November 19	Thursday 12 noon	Calgary Public Lvstk. Market Ltd. (Calgary 234-7429 - Murray)
November 26	Thursday 12:30 p.m.	Killam Auction Mart (Killam 672-4496)
November 27	Friday 2:00 p.m.	Lacombe Auction Market (Lacombe 782-3825)
November 27	Friday 9:00 a.m.	Perlich Bros. Sales Pavilion (Lethbridge 329-3101) (Approx. 1000 head)
December 1	Tuesday 11:00 a.m.	Stettler Auction Mart (1971) Ltd. (Stettler 742-2368) (Approx. 300-400 head)
December 2	Wednesday 10:00 a.m.	Highwood Auction Co. Ltd. (High River 652-3343) (Approx. 900 head)
December 2	Wednesday 12 noon	Innisfail Auction Market (Innisfail 227-3166) (Approx. 2000 head)
December 3	Thursday 10:00 a.m.	Fort Macleod Auction Market (Fort Macleod 553-3315)
December 3	Thursday 12 noon	Calgary Public Lvstk. Market Ltd. (Calgary 234-7429 - Murray)
December 4	Friday 10:00 a.m.	Edmonton Public Stockyards (Edmonton 473-5776) (Approx. 1000-1500 head)
December 4	Friday 10:00 a.m.	Grande Prairie Auction Market (Grande Prairie 532-3949) (Approx. 1000 head)
December 4	Friday 11:00 a.m.	Balog Auction Market (Lethbridge 320-1980) (Approx. 1000 head)
December 4	Friday 11:00 a.m.	Rimbey Auction Market (Rimbey 843-2439)

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1987 PRECONDITIONED CALF SALES - continued....

December 5	Saturday 10:00 a.m.	Vold Jones Vold Auction (Ponoka 783-5561) (Approx. 2000 head)
December 5	Saturday 1:00 p.m.	Cole's Auction Market (Rocky Mountain House 845-6103)
December 7	Monday 9:30 a.m.	Nilsson Livestock Ltd. (Clyde 348-5893) (Approx. 3000 head)
December 7	Monday 10:00 a.m.	Olds Auction Mart (Olds 556-3655) (Approx. 300-500 head)
December 7	Monday 11:00 a.m.	Burnt Lake Livestock Mart Ltd. (Red Deer 347-6100) (Approx. 1500 head)
December 9	Wednesday 11:00 a.m.	Wainwright Livestock Exchange (Wainwright 842-6151)
December 9	Wednesday 1:00 p.m.	Community Auction Sales Assoc. Pincher Creek 627-3466) (Approx. 400 head)
December 11	Friday 9:00 a.m.	Perlich Bros. Sales Pavilion (Lethbridge 329-3101) (Approx. 1000 head)
December 11	Friday 11:00 a.m.	Balog Auction Market (Lethbridge 320-1980) (Approx. 1000 head)

AGRI-NEWS

November 16, 1987

DEC - 4 1987

For immediate release

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

November 16, 1987
For immediate release

Elzinga says trade mission opens new doors

Agriculture Minister Peter Elzinga says the recent three week trade mission to Asian-Pacific countries has "planted the seed" for increased export of Alberta's agricultural products to several major foreign markets.

The minister, speaking at a recent press conference following the tour, says the value of the trade mission cannot be immediately measured in dollars and cents; but the contacts, exposure and goodwill created during the 18-day tour, which included 30 stops in four countries, will pay dividends in the future.

The Minister states, "From all aspects we were very successful in meeting with and encouraging the key people who make decisions, about the many positive attributes associated with buying and promoting Alberta agriculture products in their stores, restaurants and retail outlets.

"There was also a great deal of interest in our livestock genetics and crop production technology for use on their own farms.

"We received commitments from several representatives all interested in beginning or increasing trade relationships with Alberta. I realize the tendency is to expect a mission like this to immediately generate new contracts and increased exports, but it is a gradual process with the benefits developing over the next months and years."

Mr. Elzinga was one of four Alberta cabinet ministers making the October mission to Asian-Pacific countries. The agriculture minister specifically met with government and business officials in Korea, Japan, China and Hong Kong.

Alberta beef was one of the major export products promoted during the mission. Officials with the Seiyu store chain in Japan and major hotels in Hong Kong were impressed by Alberta beef demonstrations and indicated they would increase use and promotion of Alberta beef products in their stores and food service areas.

(Cont'd)

Elzinga says trade mission opens new doors (cont'd)

Alberta Agriculture Minister Peter Elzinga, left, and department trade director Jeff Kucharski check an Alberta beef product sold in one of the Seiyu Stores in Japan during their recent trade mission to Asia. Looking on at right is Kenji Makise, Seiyu representative in Alberta.

Elzinga says trade mission open new doors (cont'd)

The Seiyu chain, which is involved in a staff training exchange program with Alberta Agriculture, is also planning a major promotion of a full line of Alberta food products in its retail network.

In the People's Republic of China Mr. Elzinga signed a new protocol agreement with Chinese officials which provides opportunities for Alberta's private commercial sector to sell beef and dairy cattle to that country.

The Minister states, "The trade mission will not necessarily generate contracts between a retailer in Hong Kong or the Chinese government and Alberta Agriculture. But it does, in many cases, open the door for our companies - the food processors, meat packers and firms specializing in livestock genetics in our private sector - to go in and close deals in the foreign markets.

"In countries with centrally controlled economies they are impressed by the political involvement in trade relationships. They like to see the Government of Alberta working closely with private industry on trade issues. They place a high emphasis on government involvement."

The Minister says the trade mission helped developed personal contacts and raise awareness of Alberta and the quality of Alberta products in the eyes of the Asian trading partners.

"It's a very competitive market out there, with many countries making a bid for a share of this enormous market," says the Minister. "Alberta is price competitive and we also have quality products and a good reputation on our side. It is important for us to create a solid relationship with the key players in these foreign markets that will lead to expanded trade opportunities in the future."

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For further information contact:

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Alberta Agriculture, Print Media Branch, Phone: (403) 427-2121

November 16, 1987
For immediate release

December takes toll on household budget

It may come as no surprise to many, but December takes the biggest toll on the farm household budget according to the recently released results of a 1986 farm family spending study.

Figures compiled in the Alberta Agriculture/University of Alberta report show that on average Alberta farm families spend about $3,450 on household expenses during the last month of the year.

On the other hand, March was the least expensive month for household budget with costs averaging $1,800.

Household expenses includes everything from food, clothing and transportation, to utilities, furnishings, entertainment, education, savings and insurance.

The Farming for the Future funded study of 318 farm families shows December spending ranged from a low of $1,325 to a high of about $5,872 for the month, including savings and investments.

But the report authors note December's peak can't all be blamed on holiday season generosity. They say some households participating in the study may have chosen to record certain expenses just before the year end.

"Different holiday season spending habits could account for some of the variation," says the report. "Another reason is that some families recorded certain infrequent and not easily assignable expenditures at the end of year (such as utilities, telephone and education expenses for children away at school).

"A third possible explanation is the tendency of some households to make decisions on such expenditures as charitable donations at the end of the calendar year."

On a month to month basis, January spending averaged $2,046; February $2,288; March $1,800; April $2,138; May $2082; June $1,943; July $1,844; August $1,869; September $1,854; October $1,863; November $1,956 and December $3,455.

(Cont'd)

December takes toll on household budget (cont'd)

For more information or a copy of the FAMEX study contact any district home economist or Alberta Agriculture, Home Economics Branch, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

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Contact: Jean Wilson - Shirley Myers
427-2412

Alberta Agriculture, Print Media Branch, Phone: (403) 427-2121

November 16, 1986
For immediate release

Household expenses follow family trend

If farm couples assume the cost of raising a family is going to increase each year until the children are grown and leave home, they probably assume correctly.

But a recent report from a 1986 provincial survey says it's doubtful the older couple will turn around and spend all the extra money on themselves once the kids are gone.

Results of the 1986 FAMEX (FAMily EXpenditure) Study conducted by Alberta Agriculture and the University of Alberta shows the cost of running a farm household increases as the children are growing.

The study report says this is a fairly consistent trend across the country, however the FAMEX study of 318 Alberta farm families showed older couples didn't change their discretionary spending habits that much once they were alone.

"The data are generally consistent with observations that family expenses rise until the children leave home," says the report. "A second, more recent, theory that 'empty nesters' become big spenders on certain discretionary items because of their newfound leisure time and greater disposable income does not seem to be borne out by this sample; nor is there evidence of a large-scale return of adult children who have been unable to find jobs elsewhere."

The year-long province-wide study, funded by Farming for the Future, asked participating families to keep detailed records of their household spending habits which included everything from food, clothing and transportation, to education, entertainment, gifts, utilities, capital items and savings.

The study authors used the age of the household husband as the indicator of changing family expenses.

In a category of husbands under 35 years of age, average household expenses excluding savings for the year were pegged at $21,244.

(Cont'd)

Household expenses follow family trend (cont'd)

In the category of husbands between 35 and 44 years of age, average household spending costs were set at $25,094 annually. Average household expenses dropped slightly in the 45 to 54 years of age category to $25,015. In the over 54 years category, household spending dropped to $22,949.

Some of the major household spending items that changed over the years as the family matured included food (both at home and eating out), clothing, recreation and education.

Again based on categories which follow the age of the husband, in the under 35 category food went from $4,922 a year to a high of $5,906 in the 45-54 age category, and dropped to about $4,393 per year in the over 54 category.

Clothing went from a low of $1,637 a year to a high of $2,247 before dropping back to about $1,382 a year in the over 54 years of age category.

The combination of recreation, entertainment and education expenses ranged from $1,553 a year for the youngest farm family, to a high of $2,591 for the 45 to 54 year old category, and down to $1,621 annually for the over 54 category.

Expenditures which did increase in the over 54 category, presumably after the children had left home, were in areas of gifts, savings, insurances and capital expenditures for household items such as furniture, appliances, vehicles and renovations.

For more information or a copy of the FAMEX study contact any district home economist or Alberta Agriculture, Home Economics Branch, 7000-113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

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Contact: Jean Wilson - Shirley Myers
427-2412

Alberta Agriculture, Print Media Branch, Phone: (403) 427-2121

November 16, 1987
For immediate release

New DA appointed in Fort Vermilion

A native of the Peace River region has been named the new district agriculturist in Fort Vermilion.

Paul Laflamme, a University of Alberta graduate, who was born and raised on the family farm near Falher, has taken over as DA at Alberta Agriculture's most northerly office.

Laflamme's appointment was announced by John Knapp, Alberta Agriculture's director for the Peace River region.

The new DA is filling a vacancy created by the earlier move to Lacombe by Arvid Aasen to the post of annual forage specialist with the department's field crops branch.

After completing high school, Laflamme operated his own grain farm in the Falher area for about seven years, before attending the U of A in 1982. He joined the department after graduating in 1986 with a bachelor of science degree in general agriculture.

Prior to his appointment to Fort Vermilion, he had received district agriculturist training at the department's Valleyview office.

Laflamme says he is looking forward to being of assistance to the agriculture community in Improvement District 23.

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Contact: Paul Laflamme
927-3712

November 16, 1987
For immediate release

1987 offered real weather variety

While 1987 fell short of providing Alberta farmers with a perfect crop production season, it wrapped up with some of the best conditions for harvest on record, says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

Peter Dzikowski, weather resource specialist in Edmonton, says generally the year started out with good soil moisture, turned dry into early summer and wet by late July and August, before clearing to near-perfect harvest conditions through September and October.

Looking back over the past season, Dzikowski says the variable weather did create some crop problems, but generally resulted in fair growing conditions for the major crops.

April was very mild, with average temperatures four to five degrees Celsius above normal, says Dzikowski. Monthly precipitation totals were around normal values in northern and central Alberta, but about 50 per cent of normal in southern Alberta

Average monthly temperatures in May were one to two degrees Celsius above normal. Precipitation amounts were near or above normal in northwestern and central Alberta, but less than 50 per cent of normal in southern Alberta.

June continued the warm trend with temperatures two to three degrees Celsius above normal. Precipitation amounts were near or above normal in the Peace River Region, below normal in central Alberta, and 30 to 50 per cent of normal in southern Alberta. The prolonged period of near to below normal precipitation caused soil moisture reserves to be depleted and, in some areas, crops showed signs of drought stress, says the specialist.

(Cont'd)

1987 offered real weather variety (cont'd)

July weather continued dry, until about mid-month when rainfall came to many parts of Alberta. Heavy rainfall amounts were reported at the end of July and early August. Precipitation amounts for July were near normal in the Peace region, about 50 per cent above normal in central Alberta, and almost double normal in southern Alberta. Average July temperatures were near normal.

August brought cool wet weather. Average temperatures were two to three degrees Celsius below normal. Precipitation amounts were 40 to 50 per cent above normal in northern and central Alberta, and about double the normal for southern Alberta.

September provided great harvesting weather, says Dzikowski. Temperatures were about three degrees Celsius above normal. Precipitation amounts were generally near or below normal across Alberta.

October temperatures were about one degree Celsius above normal. Precipitation amounts were generally well below normal.

The Calgary area reported only 1.8 millimetres of precipitation, 10 per cent of normal while the High Level area reported 52.9 millimetres of precipitation - three-and-a-half times greater than normal.

Most of southern Alberta reported between 20 and 30 millimetres of precipitation, which is near normal, says the specialist. However, Grande Prairie and most of central and southern Alberta reported less than 10 millimetres of precipitation. This has left the upper soil layers dry going into the late fall period.

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Contact: Peter Dzikowski
422-4385

November 16, 1987
For immediate release

Fertilizer pays - when used wisely

While farmers may want to save money by trimming crop production costs, industry and government specialists agree cutting back on fertilizer is generally not the way to do it.

Ross McKenzie, a soil fertility specialist with Alberta Agriculture in Lethbridge says spending money on fertilizer is still a good investment, provided the proper amount and right type is used.

"Too little fertilizer results in lost profits, too much cuts into profits and an unbalanced fertilizer blend can even reduce yields," he says. "The best way to maximize yields 'economically' is to apply the right amount and types of fertilizer. And the way to do this is to follow the recommendations derived from a soil test."

Soil testing in the fall just before freeze up is the best time to evaluate nutrient levels of individual fields, says the specialist. Soil testing in late fall gives farmers time to make fertilizer decisions over winter, plus shop around for the best fertilizer deals before the spring rush.

Taking fall soil samples also provides farmers with the opportunity to check soil moisture levels going into winter. McKenzie stresses that for dryland farmers, it is critical to not only check soil fertility levels but also soil moisture conditions. This allows adjustment of fertilizer rates to soil moisture conditions.

The specialist says farmers are being bombarded with recommendations on how to make their farms profitable. They are being told to improve efficiency, reduce input costs and increase yields to reduce production costs per bushel.

"With our present economic conditions it is not profitable to apply excess amounts of fertilizer just to ensure we won't run short," he says. "But arbitrarily cutting fertilizer costs is not the way to achieve maximum economic yields either."

(Cont'd)

Fertilizer pays - when used wisely (cont'd)

McKenzie suggests farmers follow a soil fertility program to provide what the crop needs to produce an economically optimum yield. He says soil testing is the best way to determine fertilizer requirements, and it allows farmers to monitor changes in plant-available soil nutrients.

The Lethbridge regional specialist stresses that soil tests work well - when used correctly".

Farmers who apply only the right amounts of nutrients will obtain an economic yield increase, he says. Farmers do not need to apply fertilizers when soil nutrient levels are above critical levels, as there is no evidence that this will increase crop yields.

"There is nothing wrong, particularly in tough economic times, with utilizing soil nutrient reserves," says McKenzie. "For example, available phosphorus in some soils has increased as a result of many years of phosphorus fertilization and other soils have high natural reserves of potassium.

"A good farm manager uses only the fertilizer he needs. The bottom line is that fertilizer is still a very good investment - when used wisely."

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Contact: Ross McKenzie - Lethbridge - 381-5126
Doug Penney - Edmonton - 427-5346
Garry Coy - Fairview - 835-2291

November 16, 1987
For immediate release

Brenda Ralston receives training at Wetaskiwin office

An Albertan who has spent the past seven months working for Alberta Agriculture in Hanna has been named district agriculturist in training at Wetaskiwin.

Brenda Ralston was named to fill the vacancy created earlier this year by the promotion of Pat Ramsey to regional livestock specialist at Vermilion.

The announcement of Ralston's appointment was made by Alan Hall, director of the department's North Central Region, headquartered at Red Deer.

Born and raised on a cattle and grain farm near Balzac, a community just north of Calgary, Ralston graduated from the University of Alberta in 1986 with a bachelor of science degree in agriculture, majoring in animal science.

She began her career with the department on a part-time basis in 1986 working as a livestock production technologist, an assistant 4-H specialist and most recently as a regional soils technician.

In her new position, Ralston will be a DA in training working with long-time DA Hector Goudreau.

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Contact: Brenda Ralston
352-1240

November 16, 1987
For immediate release

Curtis Weeks joins Stettler office

A native of southern Manitoba, who has spent the past 30 months working for Alberta Agriculture in Athabasca, has been named co-district agriculturist in Stettler.

Curtis Weeks, who joined the department in 1985, was named to fill the vacancy created earlier this year by the promotion of Glen Werner to director of South Central region in Airdrie.

The announcement of Week's appointment was made by Alan Hall, director of the department's North Central region, headquartered in Red Deer.

Born and raised on a mixed farm near Snowflake, Manitoba, Weeks graduated from the University of Manitoba in 1984 with a bachelor of science degree in agriculture, majoring in crop science. Before attending university he was also very involved in the 4-H program.

Weeks began his career with the department as a training district agriculturist first at Ryley and then at Athabasca, where he worked with district agriculturist Gary Berger.

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Contact: Curtis Weeks
742-7500

November 16, 1987
For immediate release

Forage association manager named Athabasca DA

An agrologist known to many producers in the northwest region as manager of the Pembina Forage Association (PFA) has been named an Alberta Agriculture district agriculturist in Athabasca.

Lorne Cole, who served PFA members for the past two-and-a-half years from headquarters in Westlock, has joined Gary Berger as one of two DAs at the department's Athabasca office, about 150 kilometres north of Edmonton.

Cole's appointment was announced by John Tackaberry, director of the northwest region, headquartered in Barrhead. The new DA replaces Curtis Weeks who recently transferred to the Stettler office.

Born and raised on a cattle and grain farm near the southern Saskatchewan community of Killdeer, Cole attended the University of Alberta in Edmonton. He graduated in 1985 with a bachelor of science degree majoring in range management.

As manager of the forage association which served farmers in the Sangudo, Barrhead, Westlock and Athabasca areas, Cole was involved in a wide range of forage production projects.

As an example he helped establish the PFA's demonstration cow/calf pasture project and managed the steer pasture project, both which were designed to compare livestock rate of gain with different forage varieties and pasture management regimes.

Cole says he is looking forward to helping producers in the Athabasca district with their livestock and crop production concerns.

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Contact: Lorne Cole
675-2252

Agri-News Briefs

FINAL ROUND OF 4-H SCHOLARSHIPS COMPLETE

Alberta 4-H club members from Lacombe, Milk River, Strathcona County, Calmar and Calgary complete this year's list of recipients sharing more than $28,700 in scholarship money. These six students were among nearly 200 young Albertans who applied for awards offered through 25 scholarship sponsors. Winners of the awards include: Central Alberta Dairy Pool scholarship of $500 each, Melanie Kamps and Michael Rainforth of Lacombe; Lethbridge and District 4-H Beef Committee scholarship of $250, Carol Lodermeier of Milk River; and 4-H Foundation of Alberta scholarship of $250 each, Colleen Francis of Ardrossan, Tracy Munro of Calgary and Faye Wedman of Calmar. The recipients will use the funds toward their college and university educations. For more information on 4-H scholarships contact Anita Styba at 422-4444 in Edmonton.

SEMINAR LOOKS AT VALUE OF SLOUGH HAY

Farmers wondering how slough hay fits in with beef cattle rations are invited to an afternoon seminar near Lacombe in early December. Sponsored by Alberta Agriculture the session which gets underway at 1:15 p.m. December 3, will discuss the value of lowland forages for beef cattle. Lowland forages is a new name for high quality slough hay. To be held at the Mirror Community Hall, just east of Lacombe, seminar speakers will include Dale Zobell, regional livestock specialist with the department in Red Deer who will give an overview of using the forages in beef rations; Dr. Charles Bird, a botanist and farmer and Don Carlyle, also a farmer from the Mirror area who will discuss identification of lowland forage species; and Lacombe DA Neil Miller, who will discuss production of top quality slough hay. The session is free and for more information contact DAs Neil Miller or Stuart Tucker in Lacombe at 782-3301 or 342-2813.

(Cont'd)

Agri-News Briefs (Cont'd)

MONEY DONATED TO FORAGE RESEARCH WORK

With funds from both private donations and government grants, the University of Alberta has about $48,000 available for silage and forage research. The fund was topped recently with a $16,000 donation to the U of A by Mr. and Mrs. Dwight Smith-Gander. Mr. Smith-Gander is the general manager of Alberta Ag-Industries Ltd. of Westlock, a firm which specializes in the sale and distribution of silage bags and related equipment. The silage bags are the large, tube-like, heavy-duty plastic bags used for keeping wet forage under air-tight conditions. The current donation follows a previous donation of $12,000 to the university from the company for research into storage of high moisture barley. That donation had qualified for matching funds from the Alberta Agriculture Research Trust. The $16,000 donation is eligible for double matching by the Alberta government, making a total of $48,000 available for forage research. Dr. John Kennelly, professor of dairy nutrition in the U of A's animal science department says a donation to any of the university endowment funds is eligible for double matching grants. For more information contact the university's development office at 432-4418 in Edmonton.

PLANS AVAILABLE FOR TAPERED CORRAL CHUTE

Cattlemen frustrated by small or young livestock turning around in corral chutes should obtain plans for a working chute with sloping sides. The tapered design allows for smoother handling of both mature and young cattle. Specialists with Alberta Agriculture say the width and shape of a single file working chute is critical, otherwise small or young animals will turn around and create problems. To make a single file chute universal for both large and small animals, it is necessary to taper the bottom 30 inches of the chute. Construction plans for the tapered single file working chute are available in the November issue of the Beef 'n' Bacon newsletter. For a copy of the publication contact Alberta Agriculture district offices or phone the department's regional offices in Barrhead at 674-8248 or Red Deer at 340-5336.

Alberta Agriculture, Print Media Branch, Phone: (403) 427-2121

AGRI-NEWS

November 23, 1987

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For immediate release

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

November 23, 1987
For immediate release

Special crops conference appeals to farmers

Alberta farmers need to diversify and special crops are one option available to traditional grain and oilseed producers, a provincial agriculture conference has heard.

Crops such as field peas and safflower won't ever replace wheat and barley, but special crops can provide farmers with a hedge against poor markets and low grain prices, industry specialists told the recent Alternative Crops Conference in Lethbridge.

The more than 300 delegates attending the two-day conference learned that putting their eggs in more than one basket is the key to survival. They were told that special crops can be a permanent feature in an overall crop rotation program.

"We wanted to get across the message of diversification and perhaps show producers some of the options available," said Blair Roth, an Alberta Agriculture special crops specialist and conference organizer. "And I think we learned just how hungry producers are for information about alternative crops.

"Most farmers already understand the need to diversify, whether it be through crops, or livestock or other off-farm income, but many are just taking their first look at growing special crops."

The conference, organized by Alberta Agriculture and the Pulse Growers Association of Alberta, brought together farmers from across Alberta and other western provinces. Speakers included provincial, national and international specialists who discussed the broad concept of special crops, as well as specifics of crop production and marketing.

"We were extremely pleased with the response from producers," said conference chairman Tom Krahn, who is head of Alberta Agriculture's Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center at Brooks. "We had farmers from every region of the province participating in the conference, which shows the broad interest there is in this relatively new area of special crops."

(Cont'd)

Special crops conference appeals to farmers (cont'd)

Special crops are described as field crops that can be grown under standard farming methods. They do not include horticultural crops such as fruit, berries and vegetables.

There are about two dozen special crops in Alberta including several in a large category known as pulse crops. This includes dry beans, peas, lentils and lupin. Other special crops include buckwheat, canary seed, sunflower, safflower, essential oils and fibre flax.

Along with emphasizing the need to diversify, the conference also told farmers they need to learn what alternative crop markets are available; determine which special crop is most suited to their operation; get help and advice from whatever sources are available; and not worry about being an expert the first year.

"Probably the first step in the process is for the farmer to talk to the local district agriculturist about options," says Roth. "There's nothing wrong with a producer saying 'I've got an 800 acre grain farm, with this type of soil and this type of moisture, with this kind of machinery - what are my options as far as special crops are concerned?'"

After considering the preliminary information the farmer can discuss it further with the DA or with a department specialist. He should also talk to other growers of the particular crop to learn from their experience. Farmers should also contact contractors who buy the crop, and locate available markets, before going ahead.

"Producers need to assess the natural attributes of their farms and decide where their greatest potential lies," says Roth. "They must also remember that growing an alternative crop does not represent a major swing in types of crops. It's not recommended that someone stop planting 800 acres of wheat and switch to 800 acres of field peas. The alternative crop, whatever it is, should become part of the overall crop rotation program."

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Contact: Tom Krahn
362-3391

Blair Roth
381-5127

November 23, 1987
For immediate release

Farmers need to use common sense with special crops

Along with using the land and natural resources, Alberta farmers should also use their heads when launching into the relatively new world of alternative or special crops, says a long-time authority on crop production.

Dr. John Wiebe told a recent Alternative Crops Conference in Lethbridge that Alberta has the resources to produce millions of acres of special crops, but it is important for farmers to use their common sense and intuition in any new ventures.

Wiebe told the 300 delegates attending the two-day event they should avoid falling into extreme categories as either producers afraid to try anything new, or as farmers taking "silly" risks.

"...If you are afraid of change, you are a sensible, normal person," Wiebe told producers. "Only a fool makes changes without a good reason. If you are good at what you are doing, don't change on a whim or to be 'modern'. On the other hand the very fact that you are here indicates that either you are not fully satisfied with your present practice or at least you are open to the idea of exploring new possibilities.

"In my years as a working applied research scientist, I carried ideas to many farmer clients. Some could simply not live with the risk associated with change. A few took silly risks. Those who could find the right balance of innovation and experience often became the leaders of the community."

Wiebe, speaking to the conference jointly sponsored by Alberta Agriculture and the Pulse Growers Association of Alberta, was one of several provincial and national experts on alternative crops.

(Cont'd)

Farmers need to use common sense with special crops (cont'd)

The former director of Alberta Agriculture's plant industry division, who retired earlier this year, said special crops may not be suited to every farm situation. And of all the information available on special crops and all the options suggested perhaps only one or two choices may be suitable to any individual farmer.

"Farmers make crop alternative choices every year for every piece of land they have," he said. "In the context of this conference, we are simply expanding the range of alternatives under consideration. Instead of considering wheat, barley, canola, permanent forage, or summerfallow we want to expand that list to 40 or 50 choices.

"Not all the crops or crop uses mentioned here will have value to any one producer. In fact for some, maybe many farmers, the traditional crops will continue to be the best choices."

Wiebe says by making "reasoned and informed choices" farmers can produce a wide range of crops that will change prairie agriculture dramatically over the next 25 years.

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Contact: Tom Krahn 362-3391
Blair Roth 381-5127

November 23, 1987
For immediate release

"Northern soybean" needed

Alberta farmers need to find the "soybean of the north" says a former Alberta Agriculture specialist.

Speaking to the Alternative Crops Conference in Lethbridge, Dr. John Wiebe told delegates further research and testing is needed with grain legumes to develop a variety which will equal soybeans - a multi-purpose crop which dominates agriculture in warmer climates.

Grain legumes include crops generally suitable for human consumption such as field peas, lentils, faba and dry beans.

The former director of the department's plant industry division in Edmonotn, who retired earlier this year, said from these grain legumes Alberta and the West needs to develop a variety comparable to soybean.

"By their nature and because of nitrogen fixation, legumes are a good protein source for both human and animal use. To be useful (in Alberta) it/they will have to have lower temperature requirements than soybeans and preferably be frost tolerant.

"There are huge numbers of legumes world-wide that have not be tested here or which, if not fully suitable, could be developed to suit us.

Because of its northern latitude, Alberta is limited to the type of crops it can produce. Wiebe says along with grain legumes, another special crop offering promise to Alberta farmers are forages.

"For too long now we have treated forages as the poor cousins," he said. "Likely the greatest improvement in productivity in prairie Canada is possible through better forage production and utilization. It is my view that improvements can come about rapidly without major new scientific discoveries. We need to learn what is already discovered. The increased emphasis on forages at Agriculture Canada in Lacombe is a move in the right direction."

Wiebe says while the province and western Canada in general has good production potential, the region is best suited to crops requiring a cooler, dryer climate.

(Cont'd)

"Northern soybean" needed (cont'd)

He told the conference there are thousands of plant varieties around the world which have never been tested for Alberta conditions and he emphasized the need for further research.

"For the future we need a great deal more plant breeding and adaptation testing to sort out what crops we can grow successfully," he said. "Within the various plant families, genera and species is a great wealth of variability. It will take time and effort to get the right recommendations to suit us.

"Farmers and professional agrologists should be pushing federal and provincial governments and private breeders to work on crops that respond well where we are. We have barely started, and have put most of our effort into a narrow range of crops. These efforts have been good but need to be widened."

Wiebe said producers considering a move to special crops should not exaggerate the cost of tillage, planting and harvesting equipment.

"Perhaps one of the perceived barriers to changing cropping patterns is the cost of new and different equipment," he said. "This is a real cost but is in itself is not a major barrier. In actual fact it is usually a trade-off in cost against more conventional, but also expensive, machinery. Once a producer is established in the specialty crop, the total machinery cost per $1,000 of production will not be greatly different."

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Contact: Tom Krahn 362-3391
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November 23, 1987
For immediate release

Economist cautious about market future

A University of Alberta economist has cautioned Alberta farmers not to jump full tilt into special crops production without having established markets.

Dr. Terry Veeman, speaking to about 300 delegates at a recent provincial conference in Lethbridge, said he doesn't have a clear picture of long-term special crops markets. He predicted a bright short-term future for a couple of special crops, but saw uncertainty down the road.

Veeman said he wasn't trying to talk farmers out of getting involved in alternative crop production, but recommended a go-slow approach that offered flexibility.

The professor with the Edmonton university's department of economics and rural economy told the Alternative Crops Conference the success of alternative crops will depend on whether there is a market for the commodity and specifically foreign market demand. He said neither Alberta nor Canadian consumers can create enough demand to allow the industry to rely on domestic sales.

The specialist said in certain markets such as for forage seeds and field peas there is good short-term demand, but the crystal ball is cloudy as far as long-term prospects are concerned.

"The most fundamental point an economist can make to an audience assessing the potential for alternative crops is that specialty crop production is driven, first and foremost, by market demand for the product," said Veeman.

"The prairie regional market is constrained by a relatively small population base of about five million. Even the Canadian domestic market must be regarded as a relatively small one. Generally, then, one is looking to the export market to sustain and expand alternative crop production. The current success of forage seed and dry field pea production is due to their respective market opportunities in the United States and Europe.

(Cont'd)

Economist cautious about market future (cont'd)

"American farmers have been in the process of transferring cropland into grassland reserves and an expanding market for Alberta forage seed has occurred, at least temporarily. Similarly, there appears to be a current market niche in Europe in animal rations for prairie dry field peas, but there are huge questions whether that European market will accommodate greatly expanded prairie supplies."

Veeman said another problem is that if world demand and price for a certain commodity does materialize Alberta farmers won't be the only suppliers. He says there will be fierce competition among other regions and countries for a share of the action.

The economist said the pros and cons of crop diversification boils down to making a choice between two old adages..."don't put all your eggs in one basket" or "don't be a Jack of all trades and master of none".

On the positive side, crop diversification should reduce market risk and some aspects of income risk, for both the farmer and overall economy. On the negative side, it may be more economical to focus production attention and experience on one main crop or at least a narrower range of crops.

Although the conference was dedicated to alternative crops diversification, Veeman recommended farmers consider other diversification opportunities such as livestock, further diversification of grains and off-farm activities.

He said producers who currently have cattle or hogs, or off-farm employment are coping better with the agriculture economy than those relying solely on grain and oilseeds.

The economist said grain diversification could mean increasing production and marketing of non-traditional varieties. In the case of wheat this would include making more use of 3M varieties, hard red winter varieties, utility wheats and soft white wheats.

Grain diversification could also lead to development of higher yielding feed barleys.

(Cont'd)

Economist cautious about market future (cont'd)

"Alberta farmers should clearly take advantage of the advantageous short run market situation in either dry peas or forage seed," Veeman said. "There is sufficient uncertainty about the medium to long run prospects for both crops, however, that farmers would be wise to watch these markets closely and try to retain flexibility in future cropping patterns.

"Diversification into specialty crops is one alternative which should be compared with further diversification into grains or livestock."

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Contact: Tom Krahn 362-3391
Blair Roth 381-5127

November 23, 1987
For immediate release

Wind erosion workshop aimed at rural municipalities

It is hoped a one-day seminar/workshop in Lethbridge in early December will generate new awareness and action at the rural municipal level to reduce the province-wide problem of wind erosion.

Sponsored by the Alberta chapter of the Soil and Water Conservation Society, organizers say the December 8 session was designed with two objectives.

John Timmermans, a society member and Alberta Agriculture soil conservation specialist in Airdrie, says the seminar is intended to increase awareness of wind erosion in Alberta across a broad range of participants.

He says the message is aimed at county and municipal district officials, agricultural service board members, farmers and urban residents alike.

At the same time the workshop side of the program will provide participants an opportunity to share ideas and program initiatives dealing with wind erosion problems, especially at the municipal government level.

"We hope to attract the attention of local authorities such as municipal district and county councillors and agricultural service board members," says Timmermans. "It is at the local level where the most gains can be made. These are the people who work directly with producers and landowners and can introduce initiatives that can help reduce wind erosion problems."

Several speakers ranging from farmers to soil conservation specialists and agricultural service board fieldmen will be participating in the seminar/workshop to be held at the Lethbridge Lodge from 8:30 a.m. to 4:15 p.m.

Bryan Hearn, a farmer and councillor from the County of Forty Mile will discuss the constraints of soil conservation - real and perceived, while Donald Auch, a Carmangay-area farmer will give a producer's perspective of wind erosion.

(Cont'd)

Wind erosion workshop aimed at rural municipalities (cont'd)

Terry Heilman, an area resource conservationist with the soil conservation service in Great Falls, Montana will give an overview of the wind erosion problem in Montana and Craig Wood, a soil conservation specialist with the Prairie Farm Rehabiltation Administration (PFRA), will discuss the wind erosion problem and action plan implemented on the Blood Reserve.

Herbert Plain, agricultural service board fieldman with the Municipal District of Rockyview near Calgary will complete the morning program with a talk on soil conservation surveys.

Guest speaker at the noon luncheon will be Senator Herb Sparrow, president and founder of Conservation Canada.

During the afternoon workshops the audience will be divided into four groups. Part of the program will include short presentations by muncipalities on successful programs in areas of making the public aware of wind erosion, providing demonstrations on preventing wind erosion, emergency control measures and useful legislation. These workshop sessions will be the opportunity for discussion and question and answer.

Dr. Wayne Lindwall, head of the soil science section at the Agriculture Canada research station in Lethbridge, will give a workshop summary and the current outlook for wind erosion.

Cost of the seminar/workshop before December 3, is $15 which includes lunch. Late registration will be $20.

To register for the session contact Graeme Greenlee at the Alberta Agriculture office in Lethbridge at 381-5174.

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Contact: John Timmermans
948-8539

November 23, 1987
For immediate release

Timely marketing key to top pork prices

Using good quality breeding stock and selling hogs at the proper time are two key factors in getting the best hog prices, say Alberta Agriculture specialists.

A lean carcass that fits the right weight category is an important combination for earning top prices under the Alberta hog marketing system.

To get the best return on investment, Alberta pork producers should aim for at least a 100 index in desired market hog weight classes. Hogs that are too light or too heavy can cost the producer money.

The department's pork industry branch, in the latest factsheet of the Alberta Pork Production Handbook, notes that producers need to keep a close watch on market-hog weights. A difference of one to two kilograms on sale day can have a large influence on returns.

All Alberta slaughter hogs, except for some sold to small local outlets, are marketed through the Alberta Pork Producers Marketing Board. The marketing system recognizes quality through a grading system designed to reward producers for desirable hogs.

Through the indexing system producers receive more for hogs producing lean carcasses, which fall into the desired weight classes.

Hog carcasses graded by federal government officials receive a grade index according to weight and lean yield quality factors. Index values range from 80 to 114. For a hog indexed at 100, the producer will receive 100 per cent of the quoted selling price per kilogram for that day.

If a hog carcass indexes 110, the producer will receive 10 per cent more per unit weight of product. If it indexes 85, then the producer will receive a price 15 per cent below the quoted selling price for the product on that day.

The index is determined from the carcass weight class and estimated lean yield class. The higher the lean yield the higher the index in the that weight class. Demerits such as abnormal fat and other factors, can reduce the index.

(Cont'd)

Timely marketing key to top pork prices (cont'd)

The publication prepared by Fred Schuld, head of the pork industry branch in Edmonton and Ron Bazylo, regional swine specialist in Vermilion, emphasizes the importance of selling hogs at the desired weight. Because there is such a fine line between grades they recommend producers use a scale rather than their eyes to determine selling weight.

The publication gives an example of two similiar quality hogs with only about one kilogram of live weight difference. When sold they fall into different grade categories. A kilogram of weight may not seem like much, but in this example it represents a difference of about $8 in returns to the producer.

Figures provided by the Alberta Pork Producers Marketing Board show there is plenty of room for Alberta pork producers to improve hog weights to better match slaughter hog classes.

"Only about 35 per cent of Alberta hogs sold in 1986 were in weight class 5, with the highest index," says the publication. "Over 68,000 hogs indexed under 100, mainly because they were too heavy or too light. Over 20 per cent of hogs sold were outside the weight classes, 4, 5 and 6 which have the highest index."

The publication also reminds producers that achieving optimal slaughter weight may not necessarily mean waiting until the index is the highest.

"Optimal weight is the point where the cost of further feeding exceeds the increase in value of the finishing hog. A limiting factor on reaching this appropriate weight may also be the point at which the capacity of the feeding facility is reached," the publication says.

For more information or a copy of the publication "Timely Marketing of Finished Hogs" (Agdex 440/841-1) contact an Alberta Agriculture district office or write Alberta Agriculture, Publications Office, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6. Subscribers to the Alberta Pork Production Handbook will automatically receive a copy of the factsheet.

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Contact: Fred Schuld
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November 23, 1987
For immediate release

Vermilion region offers meetings on tax reform

A series of information meetings on the impact proposed federal tax reforms will have on Alberta farmers will continue for about three more weeks in the northeast agricultural region.

Farmers in the Lac La Biche/Vegreville/Wainwright/Bonnyville area interested in getting some details on the proposals contained in Federal Finance Minister Michael Wilson's white paper are urged to contact their nearest Alberta Agriculture district office for meeting times and locations.

Organized by Jim Unterschultz, Alberta Agriculture's regional farm economist in Vermilion, the meetings are intended to increase awareness and general understanding of producers about the proposed tax changes.

"Topics such as the definition of a farmer, changes to farm accounting for tax reporting, and changes to capital gains will be covered," says Unterschultz.

Working with Unterschultz to present the information are Neil Blue and Leon Benoit, winter farm economists.

The specialists plan to offer at least two information meetings in each of the DA districts in the region. The meetings which began in mid-November continue to mid-December. Farmers are welcome to attend any session.

For information on the meeting schedule contact any Alberta Agriculture district office in the region.

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Contact: Jim Unterschultz
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Editor's Note

Following is the first article in an eight-part series on farm management planning, prepared by Alberta Agriculture specialist Craig Edwards.

The series deals with some of the factors farmers and farm managers should consider in developing their own farm management plans.

Ideally the series should run sequentially from part 1 to 8, but if space or scheduling becomes a problem, each article can stand alone. If not used as a series, some articles may require minor editing.

The articles vary in length, with part one being the longest at about 700 words or about 18 column inches, while most of the other instalments are about 300 words each or about 8 column inches.

Topics to be convered over the eight weeks include:

Part 1 - Farm planning is a creative process
Part 2 - Procedures for planning
Part 3 - Economic principles used in farm planning
Part 4 - Making production decisions
Part 5 - Fertilizer economics
Part 6 - It's not too early for crop planning
Part 7 - Getting more bang from your bucks
Part 8 - Cost cutting cautions

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November 23, 1987
For immediate release

Farm planning is a creative process
Part 1

Although it may sound simple, farm planning is really the cornerstone of making any farm or ranch operation a success, says an economist with Alberta Agriculture.

"Planning is the foundation for all important farming activities," says Craig Edwards, a farm management economist with the farm business management branch in Olds. "And yet many people don't appreciate what planning can do for them.

"Many farmers are not aware of the study or discipline of farm management so they don't realize that important principles, tools and methods are available to help them make choices and decisions with the highest probability of success."

The specialist says farm planning primarily involves making choices and decisions: selecting the most profitable alternative from all the alternatives being considered.

Planning includes organizing resources with the aim of producing crops and livestock, and livestock products that will have the highest probability of maximizing profits, if that is the farmer's goal.

Edwards says planning is the most basic management function as it includes deciding on a course of action and then taking action - doing what was planned. This requires acquiring and organizing the necessary resources, including financing, to put the plan into operation.

"Using recommended planning tools and methods is a continuous process - not something to do on a stormy day and then forget," says the economist. "The plan itself will be changed as the manager (planner) gets new information from continuous observation and analysis as the plan is implemented.

(Cont'd)

Farm planning is a creative process (cont'd)

"The important ingredient is not the 'PLAN', but the planning process - informed thinking and decision making using established economic principles. The planning process provides a systematic and organized procedure that simplifies making choices and decisions."

Even the best planning methods skillfully applied cannot guarantee success, but it certainly improves the probability of achieving success, he says. Planning should be done by all the people affected by the plan, not only the manager.

"On the family farm all the members and employees take part and contribute to planning with benefit to the attitude, behavior and understanding of the group," says Edwards. "This presents an opportunity to learn the planning process from the skills of the leader (manager) for better management in the future. Management skills as well as production skills can be learned from experienced members of the farm family."

The specialist says planning is not a dull, stodgy exercise in futility, but an important and lively part of management.

"At its best it requires the highest degree of creativity from the manager and other contributors to the process. Innovative and entrepreneurial skills can contribute by discovery of opportunities which can be included in the alternatives considered for the farm business.

"Most farm businesses could benefit from better farm planning. The best way for farmers to learn how to plan is to participate in a course such as Gear Up Financially."

Edwards says farmers should check with the nearest Alberta Agriculture district office to register for the course. He says another way to learn planning methods is to study a good farm management text book or even a business text.

As well a series of articles he has prepapred on farm planning is also available and can provide good basic information. Titles include:

1. Production planning procedures 2. Economic principles used in farm planning. 3. Making production decisions. 4. Fertilizer economics. 5. Planning with crop choice worksheets. 6. Operating capital - how to use it. 7. Cost cutting cautions.

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Contact: Craig Edwards
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Alberta Agriculture, Print Media Branch, Phone: (403) 427-2121

November 23, 1987
For immediate release

Swine specialist appointed in Barrhead

Hog producers in Alberta Agriculture's Barrhead region will have a new resource person to rely on following the appointment of a regional swine specialist.

Bert Dening, who was born and raised in Alberta and is a 1978 agriculture graduate from the University of Alberta, has replaced Marvin Salomons as regional swine specialist for the northwest region. Salomons transferred to the Red Deer region earlier this year.

Dening's appointment, which was effective in mid-November, was announced by J.B. Tackaberry, director of the northwest region.

The new specialist brings considerable practical experience to his position. He has been involved in the swine industry in several capacities including marketing of breeding stock, semen collection and evaluation, and all aspects of managing a farrow to finish operation.

Part of his experience was gained while managing a 160-sow unit near Lacombe for one year and during three years with Ranchview Farms near Bentley. Ranchview Farms is a 1,000 show farrow-to-finish operation that is also involved in the sale of breeding stock.

Dening says he has always had a keen interest in the field of extension and enjoys working with and providing information to producers. Before accepting the Barrhead appointment he served a year and a half as a district agriculturist in Vegreville.

Dening is married and has three young daughters, aged 5, 3, and 2.

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Contact: Bert Dening
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For immediate release

Agri-News Briefs

MORE FUNDS ALLOCATED FOR FARM FUEL PROGRAM

The provincial government has approved another $33 million for the Farm Fuel Distribution Allowance Program, Alberta Provincial Treasurer Dick Johnston has announced. The special warrant increases the total funds available from the original budgeted figure of $97 million to an estimated $130 million. "The increased funding is necessary due to higher than expected purchases of fuel during the spring 'price wars' by the farm community," said Mr. Johnston. The Farm Fuel Distribution Allowance is an assistance program which reduces the fuel costs to Alberta farmers. It is currently set at nine cents per litre on fuel used for agricultural purposes. In addition, farm fuel is exempt from the five cent per litre Alberta fuel tax resulting in a net 14 cent per litre benefit for Alberta farmers.

REGISTER EARLY FOR PORK SEMINAR

Alberta pork producers and industry representatives can save money by registering early for the 1988 Banff Pork Seminar to be held at the Banff Springs Hotel, January 27 to 29. Several key speakers have been lined up to discuss areas of swine health, housing, herd management and meat production. Anyone planning to stay at the Banff Springs Hotel must have their reservation deposits in to the hotel before December 26. There is a special on seminar registration fees before January 1, as well as a deal on registering more than one person at a time. For room reservation information contact the Banff Springs Hotel at 762-2211 and, for seminar registration details contact the University of Alberta, faculty of extension at 432-3029 in Edmonton.

(Cont'd)

Agri-News Briefs (cont'd)

USE A CONTRACT WHEN BUYING MACHINERY

Farmers concerned about getting what they pay for, particularly when buying used machinery and implements, should get all promises and guarantees written into a contract, says a new Alberta Agriculture publication. "Because there is no statutory warranty with used equipment, it is absolutely essential that verbal assurances are spelled out in the contract, including the warranty," says the Farm Implement Contracts publication. The two-page Agri-fax lists some of the common points that should be written down at the time of sale. Salespersons may offer fewer assurances when they are requested in writing. For a copy of the publication Farm Implement Contracts Agdex 740-3 contact an Alberta Agriculture district office or write Alberta Agriculture, Publications Office, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

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AGRI-NEWS

CANADIANA
JAN - 6 1988

November 30, 1987

For immediate release

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

November 30, 1987
For immediate release

Japanese retailer buys $2 million in Alberta products

Alberta's ongoing promotion of food and consumer products has helped push exports to one of Japan's largest department store chains near the $2 million mark this year, says Alberta Agriculture's deputy minister.

Ben McEwen, recently back from a week-long promotional tour in Japan and Hong Kong, says the quality and price competitiveness of Alberta products, combined with the province's image of wide open spaces and healthy living is capturing the eye of Japanese consumers.

The deputy minister says the Seiyu Store chain, with 270 food retail outlets in Tokyo, offers "tremendous" potential for increased sale of Alberta products.

"We have established a very solid relationship with officials of the Seiyu chain," says McEwen. "They recognize the quality and value of our products and the Japanese consumer is also showing greater confidence in Alberta brandname products. In the first nine months of this year the sale of Alberta products to the chain has exceeded $1.8 million.

"We will continue to work with company officials to improve existing products and develop new products that best suit their consumer needs and trends. Our participation in promotions and being able to meet key figures of the Seiyu company, goes a long way in strengthening the ties between use."

McEwen was among officials participating in the official opening of the 12th annual Seiyu Store Canada Food Fair. Mr. Hironobu Okuyama, managing director of Seiyu Limited led the ceremonies and later gave officials a a store tour.

While the three-week long event featured a variety of Canadian-made food products, for the third year there was a focus on Alberta foods and other manufactured goods.

(Cont'd)

The Seiyu Store network is one of the top three supermarket chains in Japan and is part of the largest retail group in the country. Its department stores, with modern food floors, capture a large part of the extensive consumer market. Tokyo itself has a population of 13 million people with an immediate trading area of about 30 million people.

For the 1987 Canada Food Fair, the Seiyu Store featured a variety of Alberta products in a western theme, including a Calgary Stampede chuckwagon, western gear and posters, promotional material and mascots from the 1988 Winter Olympics, western music and pioneer photographs from the Glenbow Museum.

Dennis Glover, Alberta Agriculture's executive director of the market development branch, who joined McEwen at the food fair opening, says the food promotion focused on products such as Alberta beef and pork, cucumbers, honey, cheese, french fries, beer and spirits.

"While Alberta Agriculture is directly concerned with promotion of food and food products we realize Seiyu is a department store and we are pleased to see Alberta products, other than food, also promoted," says Glover.

Also featured during the fair were Alberta-made consumer goods such as lawn furniture, hand bags, sheepskin hats, deerskin gloves and Indian prints.

"Japanese consumer response to Alberta products was very encouraging," says McEwen. "Many of the Alberta products featured during the fair were sold out within the first week, which gives us some indication of consumer demand and acceptance."

During his stay in Tokyo, the deputy minister also joined seven senior company officials at a Seiyu Store luncheon. All these officials had previously visited Alberta.

"Since our participation in the Canada Food Fair promotion we were pleased to see two Seiyu store representatives visit Alberta to meet with beef suppliers and processors about further exports sales to Japan," says McEwen.

(Cont'd)

"We look forward to furthering the strong and close relationship with Seiyu, and increasing trade between Alberta processors and manufacturers and their retail network, to our mutual advantage."

Accompanying McEwen and Glover on the Hong Kong portion of the tour was David Wong, the department's senior trade director for the Pacific/Asia region.

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Contact: Ben McEwen 427-2145
Dennis Glover 427-4241

FEATURE PHOTOS

Alberta Agriculture Deputy Minister Ben McEwen, left, and market development executive director Dennis Glover, right, are joined by a Dah Chong Hong representative outside one of the company's Hong Kong stores where Alberta Beef is promoted.

Some of the Alberta products on display at the recent Seiyu Store Canada Food Fair promotion in Japan.

November 30, 1987
For immediate release

Hong Kong hotel, food stores feature Alberta products

A new food retail chain and a major hotel in Hong Kong have become the latest international promoters of Alberta food products.

The 27 Dah Chong Hong food retail stores and the Sheraton Hotel in Hong Kong have recently included Alberta products on their shelves and restaurant menus.

The promotions are expected to be the forerunner of millions of dollars worth of sales of Alberta meat and processed food products.

Alberta Agriculture Deputy Minister, Ben McEwen, just back from a promotional tour of Hong Kong and Japan, says there is a growing commitment to Alberta products among importers, retailers and food service managers in Asian countries.

"We recently visited Hong Kong for two main reasons," says McEwen, referring to himself, market development executive director Dennis Glover, and senior trade director David Wong.

"We were there to strengthen the relationship between Alberta and Dah Chong Hong, as that company recently opened 27 retail food stores which feature many Alberta food products. They plan to open three more stores by year end. As well we were there to participate in a three-week Alberta beef promotion at the Sheraton Hotel.

"These promotions are part of the important process of introducing Alberta products to food suppliers and distributors and eventually winning the confidence of the Hong Kong consumer. If we interest the distributors in Alberta products and if the consumer reaction is favorable the foundation has been created for expanded export markets."

Glover says Dah Chong Hong, a major Hong Kong importer and distributor, has had a long-standing relationship with Alberta, although the company has just recently opened the food retail network.

"Alberta beef is one of the features in the supermarket chain and they hope to expand their line to include products such as Alberta pork, french fries and other Canadian products," says Glover.

(Cont'd)

"The good reputation of Alberta processors has certainly earned them preferential treatment from Dah Chong Hong. The company has just completed a deal to purchase a further $1 million worth of Alberta beef."

As well Dah Chong Hong will be sponsoring in a five-week Canadian Food Fair in March. One week will be dedicated to Alberta products, such as meats, french fries, frozen vegetables, beer and spirits. This promotion is being organized by the Canadian Embassy in Hong Kong.

At the Sheraton Hotel the deputy minister participated in a three-week long Alberta beef promotion. The hotel menu featured five cuts of Alberta beef, along with other well known Canadian products. The promotion was organized with the help of Alberta Office Agent General Jack Kennedy, and food preparation assistance was provide by Maurice O'Flynn, of Edmonton, executive director of the culinary arts foundation.

"It was an extremely effective promotion," says McEwen. "The hotel restaurant had adopted a western theme. The staff wore Alberta stetson hats and a special menu identifying Alberta beef, was prepared.

"We hope through the success of efforts such as this that Alberta beef becomes a permanent feature on the menu. Certainly we have to look at the long-term and at sustained sales, but during the actual promotion between 70 and 80 per cent of the restaurant food orders were for Alberta beef products."

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Contact: Ben McEwen 427-2145
Dennis Glover 427-4241

November 30, 1987
For immediate release

Field peas benefit livestock industry

More farmers are discovering Alberta grown field peas can be turned into high quality feed for all classes of livestock, says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

The special crop, which really took off in production in 1987, is considered economical, convenient and nutritionally sound as a protein supplement, says Sam Jaikaran, a livestock nutritionist with the department in Edmonton.

He says peas can replace most of the protein feed supplements now used.

Jaikaran says peas can make up to 40 per cent of most swine diets and may find greatest use in the pig industry. Peas can also be used effectively in feeds for dairy, beef, sheep and poultry.

Alberta farmers grew more than 70,000 acres of field peas in 1987 producing an estimated 1.9 million bushels or about 51,700 tonnes of peas. Most of this production was grown under contract with the top grades sold for food processing.

Jaikaran says lower grade or cull peas are excellent for livestock feeds. But because protein levels can vary from 20 to 30 per cent, he recommends producers obtain a protein analysis on all peas to provide accurate information for ration formulations.

The monogastric nutritionist says there are many good reasons for hog producers to grow and use field peas in pig rations.

- peas can totally replace soymeal in most pig diets.
- pea diets produce daily gains, feed conversion and feed intake equal to soybean meal diets.
- peas have a higher digestible engergy content than barley or canola meal.
- peas have a good amino acid profile to complement cereal grains.
- peas have no antinutritive factors (factors which would adversely affect such things digestibility and palatibility).

(Cont'd)

Field peas benefit livestock industry (cont'd)

- Culled peas are just as nutritious as marketable grades.
- There is no difference in grower pig performance when fed either blue-green peas or yellow peas (these are colors of the most common pea varieties grown in Alberta).
- peas are easy to handle, easy to store, and easy to grind.
- because of the low fat or oil content in peas, ground feed does not go rancid in storage.
- peas require no factory processing before use; it is a crop that can be harvested, held in storage and ground as needed.
- peas can be produced on the farm in virtually all parts of Alberta.
- cost per tonne of feed may be lower with peas.
- pea-fed pigs grade and taste as well as soybean or canola fed animals.
- peas can fit into a crop rotation system with cereals.
- growing peas increases the nitrogen fertility of the soil.
- many varieties of peas are adapted to Alberta growing conditions (there are about 30 varieties of peas being used now).
- as the industry expands, peas will become plentiful and easily available in Alberta.
- use of peas in livestock feeds will prevent the export of agricultural dollars from Alberta.
- field peas are an excellent cash crop when cereal markets and prices are poor.

The specialist says it will take producers time to get used to the concept of peas as a protein supplement. He says feeding trials and demonstrations to date have produced "tremendous" results. Further research work is underway.

For more information on the value of field peas in pig rations contact Alberta Agriculture regional swine specialists or Sam Jaikaran at the soils and animal nutrition lab in Edmonton, at 436-9150.

Contact: Sam Jaikaran
436-9150

Field peas benefit livestock industry (cont'd)

(The following information, prepared by livestock nutritionist Sam Jaikaran shows the percentage of field peas which can be included in livestock rations. As an example: 40 per cent would be the same as 400 kilograms of field peas in 1,000 kilograms or one metric tonne of feed ration.)

INCLUSION RATES OF FIELD PEAS IN LIVESTOCK DIETS

PIGS

Weaners (10 - 25 kg body weight.....10 - 15 %
Feeders (25 to market weight).....40 %
Sows.....40 %
(These recommendations are based on research from Canada, Australia Denmark, England, France and Sweden as well as from on-farm feeding trials in Alberta).

POULTRY

All classes.....5 %
(There is no nutritional reason for limiting peas to five per cent in poultry diets. However, more than five per cent could cause increased yellowing of egg yolks and skin of broilers).

RUMINANTS

Lactating dairy cows.....40 %
Dairy heifers and dry cows.....40 %
Beef cows and feedlot cattle.....40 %
Sheep.....40 %
(Research on the feeding of pea diets has been done with lactating dairy cows and lambs. Although there has been no work with beef cattle there is no reason why peas should not be fed to these animals).

November 30, 1987
For immediate release

Agriculture conference planned in Kananaskis

You don't have to be in the Olympics to go to Kananaskis in 1988. Alberta Agriculture has slated its 11th annual Managing Agricultural Technology For Profit conference for the Lodge at Kananaskis March 6 to 9.

This conference for farm couples is an opportunity to experience the surroundings and spirit of the 1988 Winter Olympic Games while learning about the new and changing rules in the "farm game", says conference organizer Anita Lunden.

Many of the Olympic events in late February will be held at Mt. Allan in Kananaskis Park.

Among the 18 speakers to address the agriculture conference this year, will be former Alberta premier Peter Lougheed.

"His Monday evening address on free trade will be of interest to a variety of producers," says Lunden. "He will discusss the impact of free trade on various agriculture commodities."

Speakers from across Canada and the U.S. will provide participants with some new game plans for tax reform, alternative crops and enterprises, weather patterns, financial and risk management, animal welfare, soil conservation policies, health and the farm family.

"There will also be opportunities to discuss questions and evaluate ideas in regular and bearpit sessions," says Lunden. "And it all be in the relaxed atmosphere of this Rocky Mountain setting."

Organized by the farm business management branch of Alberta Agriculture, the conference annually attracts more than 300 participants.

Comments from past participants have described the conference as "a shot in the arm before spring work." Says one, "The conference is husband-wife oriented and helps to show the critical roles played by each member of a farm family. Helps farmers understand that agriculture is more than producing grain and livestock."

(Cont'd)

Registration forms for the conference are now available from Alberta Agriculture district offices, Alberta Wheat Pool elevators, UFA outlets, and the farm business management branch in Olds.

Lunden says conference organizers expect a lot of interest in this year's program and encourage anyone interested to register well before the Olympics.

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Contact: Anita Lunden
556-4238

November 30, 1987
For immediate release

Producers respond to survey on trucking costs

It is often cheaper for farmers to hire commercial and/or custom truckers to haul grain and oilseeds than it is to move it themselves, says a recent provincial survey of grain producers.

The word from 375 Alberta farmers asked about trucking costs was that using light farm trucks for grain deliveries is expensive. It is recommended farmers either use heavier vehicles (GVW over 14,000 kg) to get the crop to the elevator or hire a commercial/custom trucker.

The information was obtained from a survey conducted by Alberta Agriculture's production and resource economics branch. Nabi Chaudhary, a transportation economist, says producers could save money by reviewing their grain delivery methods.

"In view of the present price squeeze for grains and changes in the transportation system, grain producers will have to strive to lower the transportation bill for deliveries to primary elevators and other market outlets," he says. "This can only be achieved through the use of heavier farm trucks and/or commercial trucks. One obvious alternative for small farm truck owners is to engage commercial or custom truckers to haul grain over long distances."

The specialist says the survey of about 375 grain producers in Alberta indicated some clear-cut relationships between uses and size of farm trucks. Lighter weight trucks (GVW under 14,000 kg) were used for about 10 per cent of crop related activities. Heavier weight trucks were used for about 80 per cent of grain hauling activities.

Results of the survey, indicate a trend towards larger farm trucks, and increased use of commercial and custom trucks.

Of the total producers surveyed, three per cent of the respondents indicated that they also hauled grain for other grain producers in addition to their own. Another 7.5 per cent of the respondents reported hiring the services of custom haulers to have their grain transported, and 19.5 per cent reported hiring commercial truckers in addition to using their own trucks.

(Cont'd)

Producers respond to survey on trucking costs (cont'd)

Chaudhary says grain producers gave several reasons for using commercial and/or custom truckers. About 47 per cent of the respondents indicated their trucks are inadequate for hauling grain over longer distances. A little more than 41 per cent reported that hauling over long distances with their own truck was too expensive compared to commercial/custom truckers.

About 26 per cent of the study participants mentioned "good hauling rates" as the reason for using the services of commercial/custom haulers. Just under 18 per cent of the commercial/custom truck users reported that they were too busy with other farm operations to haul grain.

"A comparison of farm trucking costs and rates charged by commercial and custom truckers shows that grain producers with relatively smaller farm trucks can realize considerable savings in grain transportation costs by engaging the commercial/custom haulers," says the specialist.

"Results from the survey indicate that the average farm truck in Alberta has a grain box capacity of over nine tonnes. To haul a load of grain 16 kilometres with an average farm truck would cost $3.53 per tonne. If the same load is to be carried over 40 kilometres distance, the cost per tonne with the farm truck would amount to about $6.75 and would increase further with an increase in distance."

"Rates charged by custom haulers are significantly lower than the farm truck costs and rates charged by commercial carriers," he says. "For example, a custom hauler charged $3.67 per tonne for a 12 tonne load hauled over 20 kilometres. In another instance, a custom hauler charged $4.04 per tonne to haul a load of wheat 40 kilometres. A load of canola was hauled 80 kilometres by a custom carrier at a charge of $4.41 per tonne."

(Cont'd)

Producers respond to survey on trucking costs (cont'd)

The economist says the rates charged by commercial carriers appeared to be in line with the operating costs of the units. However, as commercial truck rates are not regulated, in a few instances carriers offered rates much below the published guideline rates.

"Grain producers with smaller farm trucks should take advantage of the rates/charges offered by the commercial and custom carriers to haul grain longer distances rather than hauling with their own units," says Chaudhary. "By using the services of commercial and custom carriers, the owners of smaller farm trucks are not only saving in transportation costs but also in the wear and tear of their units."

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Contact: Nabi Chaudhary
427-5395

November 30, 1987
For immediate release

Farm trucks and grain delivery patterns changing

What's the name of the Alberta outfit that owns 146,000 trucks and hauls some 10 million tonnes of grain a year to elevators and processors?

There's no company logo, but collectively they are known as Alberta farmers involved in getting their crop to market.

Information collected by Alberta Agriculture's production and resource economics branch in Edmonton, shows Alberta's farm truck fleet has increased in capacity if not in numbers since 1980.

Nabi Chaudhary, a department transportation economist who undertook a provincial survey, says the trend in farm trucks shows there were slightly fewer vehicles on the road in 1986 compared to 1980, but the number of heavier trucks is increasing.

He says about eight per cent of Alberta farm trucks are in the more than 14,000 kg GVW class and the average grain box size has increased from six tonnes in the mid-70s to more than nine tonnes in the mid-80s.

"Farm trucking of grain is an integral part of the entire grain handling and transportation system," says Chaudhary. "The role of farm trucks in transporting grain from fields and farm storage to various market outlets, such as primary elevators, feed mills, crushing plants, seed plants, feedlots and farm to farm deliveries, cannot be over emphasized.

"Data obtained from a survey of grain producers show farm trucks transport well over 90 per cent of grain delivered to various market outlets, with the balance being moved by commercial truck.

"Farm trucks deliver about 75 per cent of the grain handled by primary elevators in the province. About five to seven per cent is delivered to seed plants, four to six per cent to feedlots, less than four per cent to crushing plants (processors), and about three per cent to feedmills."

The specialist says during the 1986-87 crop year more than 11 million tonnes of grain were delivered from Alberta farms to various

(Cont'd)

market outlets, of which about 10 million tonnes were delivered by farm truck and the remainder by commercial truck.

The number of farm trucks on Alberta farms increased significantly during the late 1970s and early 1980s. In 1980-81, the number of farm trucks registered with Alberta Motor Vehicle Branch was 161,900, and increased to 167,508 in 1982-83.

In the following year, however, the number of farm trucks decreased to 161,875. At the same time, the number of heavier farm trucks (GVW over 14,000 kg) increased to seven per cent in 1983-84 from about four per cent in 1980-81.

He says as older trucks become obsolete the trend is clearly towards replacing them with larger, heavier and newer models.

According to the 1986 census, 54,604 farms across the province reported 146,309 trucks (an average of 2.7 trucks per farm), of which about eight per cent were in the more than 14,000 kg GVW class.

The specialist says he expects the trend toward heavier trucks will continue.

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Contact: Nabi Chaudhary
427-5395

November 30, 1987
For immediate release

Agriculture message offered to city schools

Alberta Agriculture representatives will be working in major urban centre schools over the next few months delivering the newest program material on the role and value of agriculture in daily living.

Beginning in Calgary and Edmonton in December and expanding to Lethbridge, Red Deer and Grande Prairie in early 1988, the Urban Agriculture Outreach Program is designed to increase awareness of agriculture among city children from Grades 1 to 9.

Along with delivering a message to students, the presentation will also act as an in-class workshop for teachers giving them a chance to see how the material can be used in future classroom studies.

The agriculture outreach project is part of the comprehensive "Agriculture in the Classroom" program co-ordinated by Betty Gabert, a specialist with the department's rural education branch in Edmonton.

"The materials we will be using in this project are just a sampling of the lesson material developed by Alberta Agriculture that is available to Alberta schools," says Gabert. "The Ag in the Classroom program reflects the government's desire to increase public awareness of the part agriculture plays in our daily lives whether we live in the country or city.

"Ag in the Classroom programs are aimed at instilling this awareness in the children who will carry it with them through their lives."

The Urban Agriculture Outreach Program involves teams of trained representatives being invited by urban schools to make classroom presentations at the primary, elementary and junior high level. While there will be dozens of classroom presentations available to students over the next six months, the program will also provide long-term assistance to educators.

"A dual objective of this program is to show Alberta teachers how this educational material can be used in the classroom," says Gabert. "Rather than have separate workshops just for teachers, we feel by going into the school and actually making presentations to a class, the teachers will get a better understanding of how it works."

(Cont'd)

Agriculture message offered to city schools (cont'd)

Along with seeing the demonstration the teacher will also receive a lesson handbook that he or she can follow to deliver future lessons.

Gabert says Agriculture in the Classroom and the Urban Agriculture Outreach Program are not to be confused with education programs offered by other agencies. As an example, she says during Agriculture Week in March the Alberta Cattle Commission sponsors a Classroom Agriculture Program (CAP) which uses volunteers to speak to Grade 4 classes about agriculture.

"CAP is an excellent program, but it is quite different from what we are providing," she says.

Lynn Fraser will be supervising the two teams of specialists who will launch the agriculture outreach in Calgary and Edmonton starting in the new year.

Applications from schools for the classroom presentations are now being taken by the department. Some talks will be given in December, but the program moves into high gear in January.

The two-person teams will be well qualified to make presentations at any grade level. There are a total of nine lessons, three specific to each division (Grades 1 to 3; Grades 4 to 6; Grades 7 to 9), being offered in the outreach program. A school can make bookings to have just one or any combination of the lessons presented to classes.

"For the sake of the students and the teachers it should be noted that these lessons are not 40-minute lectures," says Gabert. "They are very active and exciting presentations which really involve the children. They include role-playing, skits, puppets, story-telling, demonstrations, experiments and many other activities that children will enjoy. In the older grades they will even be able to milk a rubber glove so they understand the concept of milking a cow, and grind wheat with a stone as part of a lesson on food processing."

Any schools or individuals interested in more information on the presentations can contact Lynn Fraser or any member of the program staff in Edmonton at 427-2402. Call toll-free from Calgary by calling the Calgary R.I.T.E. operator at 297-6161 and ask for the Edmonton number.

Contact: Betty Gabert
427-2402

November 30, 1987
For immediate release

Find markets before sowing the seed

If you can't sell it, don't grow it, a Saskatchewan businessman advises farmers thinking about planting special crops.

Greg Simpson, manager of the Moose Jaw-area Simpson Seeds Inc., told a recent Alberta conference having markets in place is the first step in moving into the alternatives crops field.

Simpson told the nearly 300 producers attending the Special Crops Conference in Lethbridge while there are good opportunities in the relatively new alternate crops industry, farmers have to become more involved in the marketing process.

"With the increased desire to diversify from the major grains, Western Canadian farmers are now faced with the challenge of making marketing decisions," Simpson said. "As a result there is a need for farmers to better understand the marketing procedures and price discovery mechanism throughout the entire market channel."

Simpson, whose company processes a wide range of special crops with an emphasis on lentils, says the marketing system is complex and producers need to keep informed.

He says farmers need to keep current on supply and demand trends, understand such factors as consumer preferences and know the different types and grades of a product and the prices they bring.

The Western Pulse Growers Association director recommended farmers grow alternate crops under contracts with elevators or processors and make a solid commitment to the industry.

"Without farmer support the contracting firms would risk 'going short' in the market," Simpson said. "Contracting firms can only handle going short on a limited amount of sales. Eventually, importing companies would purchase more from our competing companies and Western Canada will rapidly become a 'residual supplier'".

(Cont'd)

Find markets before sowing the seed (cont'd)

The company spokesman said while an emphasis may always be on developing export markets, he feels work needs to be done to improve domestic markets as well.

As a director of the Saskatchewan Pulse Crop Development Board Simpson said he is working toward development of a domestic pulse market development strategy.

A major challenge he says is increasing the awareness of the Canadian consumer of the use and value of pulses.

"There is a need and opportunity to increase domestic consumption and to replace competing imports, particularly from Turkey," he said. "However, if the Canadian pulse industry is to be successful in capturing a significantly larger portion of the domestic market, a more co-ordinated and directed effort involving federal and provincial governments and industry is required.

He said along with the domestic market strategy, work needs to be done in: improving product image and public awareness; educating consumers and food consultants of the value of pulse crops; develop new products that respond to consumer needs for convenience and nutrition; develop untapped markets such as the food service industry; modify cleaning and sorting methods so that a consistent supply of high quality product is assured; change and improve product packaging; and increase shelf space in retail stores to compete with imported products.

The special crops conference was sponsored by Alberta Agriculture and the Pulse Growers Association of Alberta.

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Contact: Tom Krahn 362-3391
Blair Roth 381-5127

November 30, 1987
For immediate release

Register now for Peace Country Beef Cattle Days

Cattlemen in the Peace River region looking for up-to-date information on issues affecting their industry should register for a two-day seminar planned for early December.

The fourth annual Peace Country Beef Cattle Days will be staged in both Fairview and Valleyview next week offering a wide-range of information on everything from selecting vaccines and choosing the right breed, to the impact of proposed tax reforms and the latest consumer trends.

For the convenience of producers the two-day seminar, which last year attracted nearly 200 farmers and ranchers, will be offered in two centres. Cattleman living near Fairview can attend the session there starting December 10, while those near Valleyview can participate in that seminar starting December 11, says Darryl Wells, Alberta Agriculture district agriculturist in Valleyview.

"The sessions will run simultaneously so a producer can attend which ever seminar is most convenient," says Wells. "Speakers appearing at Fairview on December 10 are at Valleyview on December 11. And those at Valleyview on December 10 appear at Fairview the next day."

To register before the December 7 deadline contact any Alberta Agriculture district office in the region.

Among the speakers participating in this year's seminar are Dr. Eugene Janzen, director of the herd health program at the Douglas Lake Cattle Co. and head of the herd health division at the Western College of Veterinary Medicine; Dr. John Lawson, a livestock geneticist who has done extensive work on cross breeding cattle; Carol Hays, public relations officer for the Hays Converter cattle breed; Dr. Steve Morgan-Jones, head of meat quality research at the Agriculture Canada research station at Lacombe; and Ralph Whealty, an Idaho rancher actively involved in the Idaho Total Beef Program.

(Cont'd)

Register now for Peace Country Beef Cattle Days (cont'd)

As well representatives from the accounting firm of Deloitte, Haskins and Sells will discuss the impact of the proposed federal tax reforms on the livestock industry.

Cost is $35 per person or $60 per couple for the two-day seminar and banquet; $25 per person for the seminar only; or $12 per person for just the banquet.

For more information contact any Peace country DA office or seminar organizers, Pat Breland and Darryl Wells at 524-3301; Nora Paulovich at 835-2241 or Trevor Jones at 835-2291.

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Contact: Darryl Wells
524-3301

November 30, 1987
For immediate release

Final reminder for custom operators

There are only about 20 business days left to register you or your company in the 1988 Alberta Agriculture Directory of Custom Operators.

This annual publication acts as a reference manual of contractors providing a wide range of custom services to Alberta farmers and ranchers, says Garth Nickorick an economist with Alberta Agriculture's farm business management branch in Olds.

Contractors providing custom services to farmers, who want to be included in the 1988 directory should submit their names to the Olds office before the December 31 deadline.

The directory benefits both custom operators and farmers as it lists the people and the farm service they provide. Each year, 7,000 copies of the directory are printed and distributed in early March throughout the province.

Custom operators need to submit their name, town , phone number and type of service provided. Any contractors listed in the 1987 directory must also resubmit their information to be included in the 1988 version.

For more information on the directory contact Garth Nickorick at 556-4247.

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Contact: Garth Nickorick
556-4247

Editor's Note

Following is the second part of an eight-part series on farm management planning, prepared by Alberta Agriculture specialist Craig Edwards.

The series deals with some of the factors farmers and farm managers should consider in developing their own farm management plans.

Ideally the series should run sequentially from part 1 to 8, but if space or scheduling becomes a problem, each article can stand alone. If not used as a series, some articles may require minor editing.

For any further information on the series contact Craig Edwards in Olds at 556-4238 or the Agri-News Editor in Edmonton at 427-2121.

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November 30, 1987
For immediate release

Procedures for planning
Second in a series

Running a farm without some kind of planning is like trying to dance in snowshoes.

It lacks style, requires extra work and no one, including yourself, is sure of the next step.

Planning often seems to be one of those abstract terms that falls into that nice-but-not-necessary category, says Craig Edwards a farm business management economist with Alberta Agriculture in Olds.

"But for a farmer, planning is just as vital as knowing how grain grows or how to put pounds on a calf," he says.

"Farm planning involves setting goals and then developing a plan or plans to achieve the goals. Most farmers and members of farm families have a plan or plans of some kind, even though they don't write their plans on paper. If they didn't have a plan of some kind, they wouldn't accomplish much in achieving goals. With a lot of random stop-and-go decisions, the farming operations would be less productive."

Although there are many plans created and existing in farmers' minds, they are far more useful when written on paper, says the specialist who works at the farm business management branch in Olds.

He says when the plan is written out farmers and family, partners and others concerned with the operation have an opportunity to understand and contribute to the planning procedure.

"A written plan is an outline or sketch of the organization of the available resources and their use in the future," says the economist. "It can be very simple and even skimpy or ideally, it could be detailed enough to include operating costs and returns for each enterprise on the farm. Developed further into a whole farm budget, the resulting plan could be used as a map for the organization and operation of the farm resources, physical and financial."

(Cont'd)

Procedures for planning (cont'd)

Alberta farmers wanting to learn more about farm planning might attend courses such as the Alberta Agriculture program called "Gear Up Financially." Registration information is available from Alberta Agriculture district offices.

As well district agriculturists and regional economists of Alberta Agriculture provide assistance with farm planning and the farm business management branch has some printed material on planning procedures.

This material is available by writing to Craig Edwards, Farm Business Management Branch, Alberta Agriculture, Box 2000, Olds, Alberta T0M 1P0, or phone 556-4238.

(Next Week - Part Three in the series - Economic Principles Used In Farm Planning)

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Contact: Craig Edwards
556-4238

AGRI-NEWS

December 7, 1987

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For immediate release

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

December 7, 1987
For immediate release

Changing the Crow will benefit special crops

Paying the Crow freight benefit directly to farmers would be the best news the special crops industry in Western Canada could receive, says an industry observer.

Ken Beswick, chairman of the Alberta Grain Commission in Edmonton, says if the federal money now paid to railways was given to farmers it would go a long way in creating jobs and developing new industry in the West.

"As a matter of national policy we spend $700 million a year in order to export jobs and investment from the West to foreign countries and other parts of Canada," he says. "And it's no accident. It's an intensional, deliberate policy, which to me is unconscionable."

Beswick was referring to the federal government's Western Grain Transporation Act (WGTA) which provides an annual $700 million subsidy to rail companies to haul export grain to markets.

The exisitng method of payment does not preserve the original intent of the historic Crow freight rate, says the commission chairman. The Crow was designed as a Western development program and was not intended to subsidize the movement of western crops to export markets.

Beswick says it would be more useful if the transportation assistance was paid directly to farmers for direct investment into Western agriculture.

"I'm not saying the money would automatically be invested in developing the special crops industry, but changing the method of payment would remove a major disincentive. There would be a net gain to Western Canada. It would keep the money here, encourage investment and create more jobs."

Beswick says special crops will not mean total salvation for Western farmers hurt by rock bottom grain markets, but new crop varieties can become part of a diversified agricultural base. He says farmers will have to develop an attitude and an industry based on a blend of traditional and special crop production.

(Cont'd)

Changing the Crow will benefit special crops (Cont'd)

He encourages development of a Western Canadian food processing industry, which will reduce reliance on export markets for raw agricultural products.

With little opportunity to expand the Canadian domestic market and with the livelihood of three out of four Canadian farmers now relying on grain exports, Beswick says Western agriculture needs to change its focus.

"We will need to expand our export markets in the future, but rather than sell grains and oilseeds we need to sell processed products," he says. "We need to find non-traditional uses for our traditional crops and develop those processing industries in the West.

"The need for industries to use our traditional crops in new ways is enormous. Our resources and our experience are best suited to producing traditional crops; our domestic market for traditional cereal and oilseed products is small; the export market for these products is intensely competitive; transportation costs for low value raw products is very high in Alberta; we have ample capital resources to develop industry; and we have and educated population to build and operate industry."

The commission chairman says farmers have an important role to play in development of the processing industry. He said first they need to convince the federal government to change the WGTA method of payment.

"Farmers also need to show the willingness to develop new markets and be patient and supportive while those markets are being established. It may be a small point in some respects, but I believe farmers also need to set an example as consumers. They need to support Alberta food processors and suppliers and buy Canadian and Alberta-made products as a sign of their confidence in the industry."

Beswick says it is also important for farmers, especially producers of special crops, to show commitment and loyalty to industry.

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Changing the Crow will benefit special crops (cont'd)

"Producers can't be just fair-weather friends to these markets," he says. "They can't jump in when prices are good and jump out if things slow down. And that has happened in the past. Buyers and processors have to know that the product supply is assured, or their buyers and markets will go somewhere else.

"If a producer gets involved in a special crop he needs to show production reliability and hang in there, even in the bad years, so that he is in position to reap the advantages when markets are good."

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Contact: Ken Beswick
427-7329

December 7, 1987
For immediate release

New uses for traditional crops may be best bet

Traditional grains may be the proverbial 'four-leaf clover' Alberta farmers are overlooking as they search for ways to improve cash flow, says the Alberta Grain Commission chairman.

Ken Beswick, a Cardston-area farmer who took over as head of the commission in mid-1986, says he is a staunch supporter of crop diversification, but urges producers not to ignore the potential of making non-traditional uses of traditional crops.

Beswick says realistically he doesn't expect alternative or special crops to offer wide-spread relief to producers hurt by depressed grain markets. He says alternative crops will offer many benefits, but in the long haul finding new uses for the old standbys could be the salvation.

"I don't want to throw cold water on the concept of special crops," he says. "There are opportunities for farmers to make use of alternative crops, but when you look at the figures I don't think they have wide-spread application. Alberta farmers have demonstrated the ability to produce grains and I think in the long-run creating new uses for grains is our best hope."

The commission chairman - whose family operates a 4,500 acre farm at Spring Coulee - says there are 23 million cultivated acres in Alberta and a further four million acres in tame hay and forages. Although alternative crop production reached about 350,000 acres in 1987, it traditionally has accounted for about 250,000 acres. Roughly the same acreage is devoted to forage seed production.

"These acreages, although extremely important to some farmers, are very small when compared to our total acreage base of 27 million," says Beswick. "In spite of the best intentions, there is no way alternative crops will blossom into even 10 per cent of our cultivated land base. It just can't happen."

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New uses for traditonal crops may be the best bet (cont'd)

The commission chairman, who was among the guest speakers at the recent Special Crops Conference in Lethbridge, says he sees the greatest hope in continued research and development of new crop uses.

One potential non-traditional use of traditonal crops would be to use grains to produce ethanol - an alcohol distilled from grains that can be processed to create fuel.

Further processing known as "fractioning" of grains can produce a variety of products and additives for human food, livestock feed and industrial purposes.

Fractionation of wheat and barley for example can extract industrial starchs; sugars, wheat germ, wheat germ oil, vitamins for food processing; and brans and proteins for livestock feed.

Other processing techniques of grains such as wheat, oats, barley, malted barley and triticale can be used for making consumer products such as breadings and crumbs, breakfast cereals and snack foods.

The grain commission chairman says not all non-traditional uses will become Alberta industries, but the opportunities are there to be explored.

"In talking about special crops, farmers should not assume they will turn away from grain production and find one new special crop out there that they can lock into to have long-term market stability," he says. "But they can diversify. They may focus on grain production and support market development of some of these non-traditonal uses, while at the same time producing special crops.

"The degree of diversification will depend on the individual producer. The range of crops grown is directly related to the level of management the farmer is prepared and able to provide; the level of risk he will accept and the resources he has available. One farmer may be comfortable with two or three crops and perhaps someone else has 10."

Beswick says there will always be farmers committed to only grain production, but there will also be more producers with a blend of grain and special crops serving a variety of market niches.

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Contact: Ken Beswick
427-7329

December 7, 1987
For immediate release

Soil moisture generally good across the province

While there are some dry areas in the province, generally stubble soil moisture conditions are fairly good in Alberta heading into winter, says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

Dick Heywood, a water management specialist with the conservation and development branch in Lethbridge, says in his fall report there is low to very low moisture reserves in several spots.

Heywood says it is hoped snow and spring rains will improve the picture in the driest areas which include the central Peace River region; an area around St. Paul and Vegreville; and an area east of Drumheller and south through to the southeast corner of the province, excluding a small area around Medicine Hat.

The specialist says the stubble soil situation is reasonably normal for the time of year and generally conditions aren't going to change much over winter, while the soil is frozen.

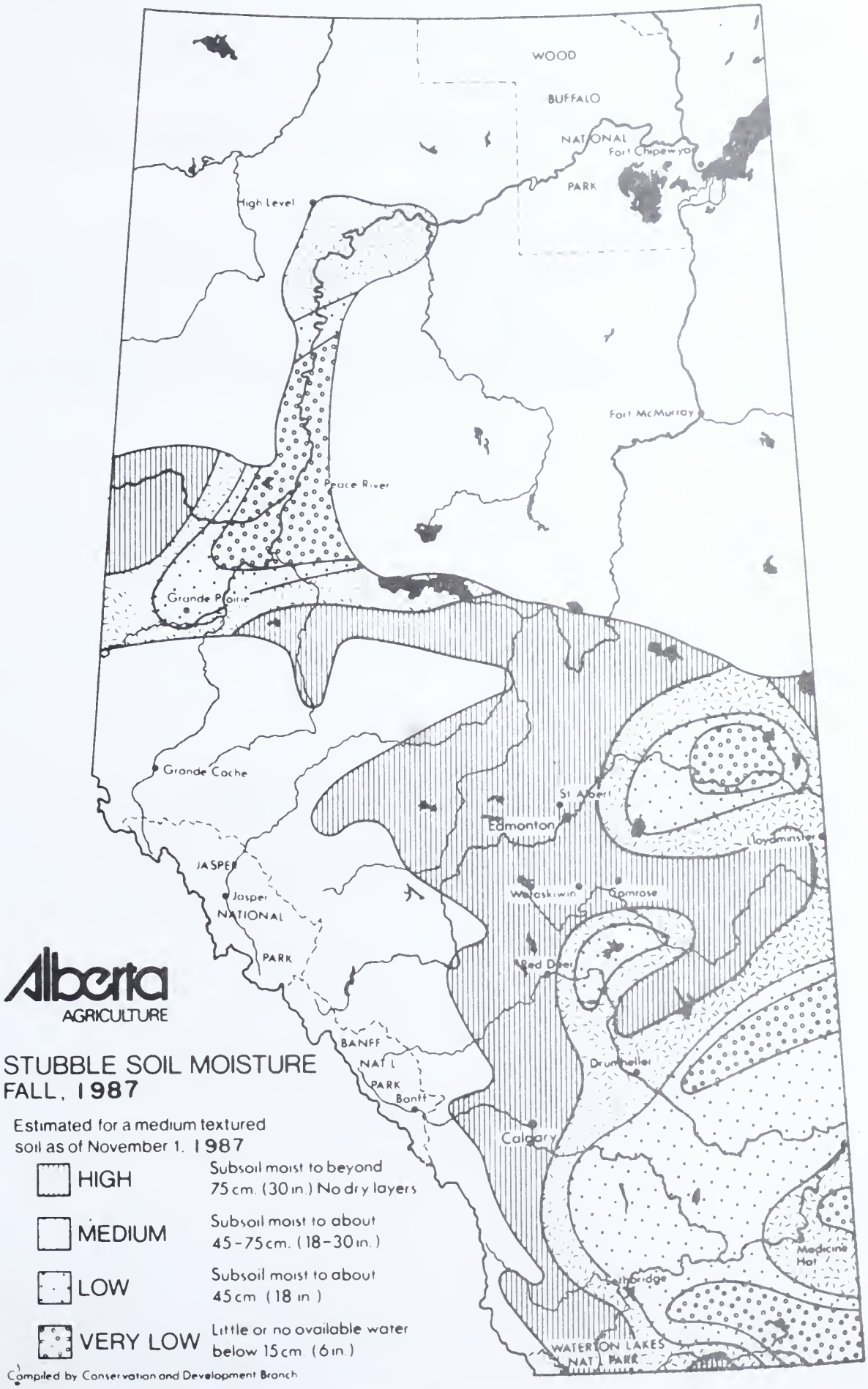
"As of early November substantial areas of the province have conditions that indicated successful stubble seeding can be anticipated in 1988," he says. "Dry areas do exist but since storage of 20 to 40 per cent of over winter precipitation can be expected, substantial portions of these dry areas can still achieve the necessary soil moisture reserves to make stubble reseeding a recommended management practice."

Although Heywood's report only deals with stubble soil moisture, he says fallow moisture conditions in southern Alberta are also generally good.

Heywood says while the dry fall may give farmers the impression the moisture reserves are poor, sub-surface soil retains moisture from July/August rains.

Information for the fall soil moisture report was collected from more than 200 field samples taken from across the province and from precipitation data. However, Heywood, says the report is not site specific.

(Cont'd)



Alberta
AGRICULTURE

STUBBLE SOIL MOISTURE
FALL, 1987

Estimated for a medium textured soil as of November 1, 1987

HIGH	Subsoil moist to beyond 75 cm. (30 in.) No dry layers
MEDIUM	Subsoil moist to about 45-75 cm. (18-30 in.)
LOW	Subsoil moist to about 45 cm (18 in.)
VERY LOW	Little or no available water below 15 cm. (6 in.)

Compiled by Conservation and Development Branch

Alberta Agriculture, Print Media Branch, Phone: (403) 427-2121

Soil moisture generally good across the province (cont'd)

The fall report gives a general picture for the province and because conditions can vary from one field to a next, he says farmers should make their own field moisture samplings next spring.

For more information on stubble soil moisture contact any Alberta Agriculture district office or Dick Heywood in Lethbridge at 381-5154.

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Contact: Dick Heywood
381-5154

Editor's Note

Attached with this report is a copy of the Alberta Agriculture map showing the pattern of 1987 fall stubble soil moisture reserves in the province. For the print media this map may be useful in illustrating the moisture situation.

December 7, 1987
For immediate release

Conference looks at future of irrigation

A two-day conference in Lethbridge in late January will take a look at the future of the irrigation industry in Alberta.

Irrigation farmers and others involved in the management and supply of goods and services to the industry are urged to participate in the January 25 and 26 conference sponsored by Alberta Agriculture and County of Lethbridge Agricultural Service Board.

Bob Riewe, an irrigation management specialist with the department in Lethbridge and a conference organizer, says programs are now available at Alberta Agriculture district offices and irrigation branch offices.

Riewe says the conference is open and of interest to all water users regardless of whether they are within an organized irrigation district.

Conference topics include forage seed potential and management; irrigated pasture; new irrigated crop varieties; scheduling crop rotations; alternative crops and their future; system modifications, pump and power units; pump testing and the effects of district improvements to on-farm irrigation systems.

Other areas to be covered include negotiating strategies, the role of the irrigation council, benefits of co-operative water development; climatic cycles and risk factors, and irrigation economics.

Riewe says keynote speakers for the conference include Peter Melynchuk, assistant deputy minister of Alberta Environment who will speak on the influence of the Oldman River Dam on the South Saskatchewan River Basin; Dick Ericksen, manager of the East Columbia Basin Irrigation District in Washington and Laurie Tollesson, manager of the Saskatchewan Irrigation Development Centre.

Cost of the conference to be held at the Lethbridge Lodge Hotel is $45 which includes conference proceedings, lunch and a banquet.

For more information contact Dave Monaghan at 381-5136, Bob Riewe at 381-5141, Mike Clawson at 381-5237 or Lloyd Healy at 654-2161.

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Contact: Bob Riewe - 381-5141

December 7, 1987
For immediate release

Revised pork production course available

Anyone looking for the latest advice on achieving profitable pork production should register for a copy of a newly revised Alberta Agriculture home study course.

The new Alberta Pork Production Course, replacing a four-year-old manual, provides up-to-date information on all production aspects including reducing baby pig mortality, increasing litter size and number, boosting average daily gain, providing better feed conversion efficiency and increasing carcass quality.

As well the course provides an in-depth segment on swine heredity, the latest in effective feed rations and formulations, application of management practices, marketing, swine diseases and herd health, and housing and manure handling information.

The course will be useful to those already involved in hog production as well as newcomers to the business.

"About half of the material contained in this home study course is new or revised information," says Pat Davidson, co-ordinator of the home study program in Edmonton.

"This information is prepared by specialists with access to the latest research material, management and technical advice available to the industry."

The $30 course is designed in a seven-lesson package. Producers are urged to work through the chapters in sequence at their own speed. At the end they can ask for an exam to test their understanding of the material.

"The course is designed to fit the producer's timetable and the exam is optional," says Davidson. "Many producers found the previous home study course very useful and we hope the revised version will be equally well-accepted by the industry."

Along with the course material, subscribers will also receive two supplementary publications developed by the Veterinary Infectious Disease Organization (VIDO) - Farrowing Barn Design and Management and Swine Nursery Design.

(Cont'd)

Revised pork production course available (cont'd)

Course registration forms are available from Alberta Agriculture district offices, regional swine specialists and from the Home Study Office, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

Requests for course material and the registration fee should be sent to the Rural Education and Development Association (REDA) at 14815 - 119th Avenue, Edmonton, Alberta, T5L 2N9.

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Contact: Pat Davidson
427-2404

December 7, 1987
For immediate release

Forage agronomist appointed in Lacombe

A new specialist has joined the Alberta Agriculture field crops branch in Lacombe to help Alberta farmers get the most out of forage crops.

Arvid Aasen, an 11-year veteran with the department, has been named the forage agronomist with prime responsibility to promote sound forage production practices.

In making the announcement of Aasen's appointment, Bob Nelson, head of the crop production section in Lacombe, says the newly created position reflects the importance of forage crops to Alberta producers.

The specialist, who comes to Lacombe after serving four years as district agriculturist in Fort Vermilion, will focus attention on annual forage crops including hay, pasture and silage production.

As well, he will provide advice and extension service on using grains such as oats and fall rye for emergency or supplemental annual pasture. And he will also provide recommendations on problems such as salvaging, for forage, grain crops that have been damaged by hail or drought.

Aasen will be involved in developing practical information on growing annual and perrenial forages under various soil, moisture and fertilizer regimes. He will work with farmers, district agriculturists and other extension specialists in applying this information.

The specialist began his career with the department as district agriculturist in Wainwright. After seven years in this position, he served a two-year stint overseas with the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), before returning to Alberta and accepting the Fort Vermilion post.

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Contact: Arvid Aasen - Bob Nelson
782-4641

Editor's Note

Following is the third part of an eight-part series on farm management planning, prepared by Alberta Agriculture specialist Craig Edwards.

The series deals with some of the factors farmers and farm managers should consider in developing their own farm management plans.

Ideally the series should run sequentially from part 1 to 8, but if space or scheduling becomes a problem, each article can stand alone. If not used as a series, some articles may require minor editing.

For any further information on the series contact Craig Edwards in Olds at 556-4238 or the Agri-News Editor in Edmonton at 427-2121.

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December 7, 1987
For immediate release

Economic principles used in farm planning
Third in a series

It takes some effort to learn the basics of farm planning, but once you've done it the skill will be useful for the rest of your life, says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

"Understanding and using the principles in farm planning requires study and energy," says Craig Edwards, farm management economist at the farm business management branch of Alberta Agriculture in Olds. "But once learned and applied, the principles benefit farmers by simplifying decision making.

The word principle applies to any generalization that provides a basis for reasoning or a guide for conduct or procedure, he says. In farm management, economic principles guide the decision-making process. They simplify the job of choosing which resources to use in the production process, what products to produce, and how much of each to attempt to produce.

Economic principles provide the framework to make informed and reasonable decisions which eventually will maximize the wealth of the decision-maker.

Edwards says principles of planning are just as real as the principles people live by, the principles of nature, or the principles of mechanics.

"Many of us live by the Golden Rule, 'Do unto others as you would have them do unto you' which is a principle to live by," he says. "We learn to stand upright in our cribs after we adapt to the principles of gravity. Farmers use augers to move grain, using the principles of the screw described by Archimedes more than 2000 years ago. We are surrounded by material goods built on the application of principles of nature, which we learned in school but can't remember now. How many of us can remember the principles of mechanics, heat and thermodynamics, optics, electricity, magnetism, sound and so on?

"Fortunately, there are only a few economic principles used to maximize returns in a business."

(Cont'd)

Economic principles used in farm planning (cont'd)

The economist says economic principles include diminishing returns, added costs and returns, equimarginal returns, opportunity costs and resource and product substitution.

"A principle is defined as a general or fundamental truth: a comprehensive and fundamental law, doctrine or assumption on which others are based or from which others are derived," he says. "In an era when management decisions are so critical to the success of any operation it is important that these fundamental laws - these economic principles - be understood."

The specialist says attending an Alberta Agriculture "Gear Up Financially" course is one of the best ways to learn farm management principles. Program information is available by calling any district office.

If unable to register for a course, farmers can learn more by studying some written explanations available by phoning or writing Craig Edwards at Box 2000, Olds, Alberta T0M 1P0, (telephone 556-4248).

(Next week - Part Four in the series - Making Production Decisions)

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Contact: Craig Edwards
556-4248

December 7, 1987
For immediate release

Insect specialist appointed in Brooks

Southern Alberta farmers and other rural landowners concerned about insect problems will be able to get advice from a newly appointed Alberta Agriculture specialist in Brooks.

Jim Jones, a four-year veteran with the department, has taken over a new position as an entomologist with the crop protection branch, stationed at the Alberta Special Crops and Horticultural Research Center.

In announcing Jones' appointment, Don Macyk, director of the plant industry division in Edmonton, says this is the first time the crop protection branch has had a full-time insect specialist in southern Alberta.

In his new position Jones will work directly with farmers and commodity and producer associations, in identifying and recommending solutions to a wide range of insect-related problems.

"I will be responding to all client needs and primarily provide an extension service," says Jones. "Along with individuals I will be working with groups such as the vegetable producers, the greenhouse operators, the pulse growers and many others, looking at specific concerns as well as long-range insect control programs."

Jones joined the department in 1983 as an assistant entomologist with the crop protection branch in Edmonton.

For the past four years he has worked on various entomology programs, particularly field crop insect pests. In southern Alberta, European corn borer control has been a concern and he has assisted with insecticide trials at Medicine Hat and monitoring throughout the corn-growing areas.

Grasshopper control and monitoring has also consumed much of his field time. Work throughout southern Alberta included spring egg and nymph samplings, investigation of the extent of infestations, offering advice to farmers in these areas and grasshopper control insecticide trials.

(Cont'd)

Insect specialist appointed in Brooks (cont'd)

As well Jones wrote and edited sections of the department's guide to Crop Protection in Alberta, Part I - Chemical, and the soon to be published Part II - Non-Chemical; the home study course "Crop Protection '86", and several insect pest information sheets useful to the farming community.

Originally from Ontario, he received his entomology training from Brock University in St. Catharines, earning a bachelor of science degree. He later attended the University of British Columbia where he earned his master of science degree.

One of his first projects in Brooks will involve a Farming for the Future chalkbrood control program. He plans to produce a practical manual for chalkbrood control in leafcutter bees.

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Contact: Jim Jones
362-3391

December 7, 1987 18
For immediate release

Nothing typical about November

November was untypically a fall month with plenty of ups and downs in temperature, says a weather specialist with Alberta Agriculture in Edmonton.

Peter Dzikowski, with the conservation and development branch, says that average temperatures of four to six degrees Celcius above normal for November have delayed the start of winter.

"November started off mild, then temperatures soared to maximum values in the mid to high teens," says the specialist. "A week later, minimum temperatures were down in the minus mid to high teens. Calgary reported a high of 19 C and a low of -19 C just 10 days apart. By the end of the month temperatures had returned to above normal values."

Precipitation amounts received this month varied from a low of 0.6 millimetres at Slave lake, pretty close to zero, to a high of 14.2 millimetres at Red Deer, which was close to the normal value of 15.1 millimetres.

Most locations across Alberta reported between five and 10 millimetres of precipitation, which was about 20 to 40 per cent of normal. Normal precipitation values for November are quite low at about 20 to 30 millimetres.

Average monthly temperatures ranged from a cool -7.6 C at High Level, 3.8 C above normal, to 4.0 C at Lethbridge, 4.8 C above normal. Peace River was notable with an average temperature of 0.4 C which is 7.7 C warmer than normal for November.

The combination of mild temperatures, and below normal precipitation for two months in a row, and the absence of snow cover has left surface soil layers very dry, says Dzikowski. However, there may be moisture reserves in deeper soil layers.

He says the dry surface soil layers and the absence of snow cover create a potential for wind erosion problems in fields with no protective crop residue or stubble.

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Contact: Peter Dzikowski 422-4385
Alberta Agriculture, Print Media Branch, Phone: (403) 427-2121

CANADIANA
JAN - 6 1988

EDITOR'S NOTE

Please note that because of early deadlines for the holiday season you are receiving, in this envelope, both the December 14 and the December 21 issues of Agri-News.

Although the issues are dated, there is no particular embargo in effect, so feel free to use the material as needed.

Again to accommodate deadlines, you will receive the December 28 and January 4 issues in an early mailing next week.

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CORRECTION

An article in the December 14 issue referring to calendars now available from Alberta Agriculture incorrectly described them as 1987 calendars. These calendars are in fact for 1988. Please note the change in the index and in the article on page 11.

AGRI-NEWS

December 14, 1987

JAN 6 1988

For immediate release

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

December 14, 1987
For immediate release

Elzinga welcomes completion of Free Trade document

Alberta Agriculture Minister Peter Elzinga says it is the-behind the-scenes work like that done at the department's food processing development centre in Leduc that helps Alberta companies capture a greater share of national and international markets.

The minister says the centre has established a proven track record in the last three years in working with Alberta industry to develop the quality and scope of products available to consumers.

The Minister states, "The bottom line in the success of the agriculture industry is producing products that have appeal and are useful to consumers, not only in Alberta, but across Canada and in international markets as well.

"The success of many of these products and ultimately the companies that produce them, is a tribute to the dedication and talent of the staff at the Alberta Food Processing Development Centre."

The minister made his comments during a recent tour of the facility which marked its third anniversary of operation in early December.

He said the recently completed Free Trade agreement with the United States will place even more emphasis on the work at the Leduc centre.

A strong supporter of the agreement, the minister said along with increased access to American markets will come demand for more variety of export food products which are adapted to the needs of U.S. consumers.

Mr. Elzinga stated, "I am very pleased to see the final text of the Free Trade agreement is now completed and will soon be available to the public. We firmly believe that this agreement will be good for Alberta's agriculture and food industry and for the province as a whole.

"I certainly understand the concern of those who perhaps have agreed in principle with the agreement but have reserved full endorsement until they could see the details. Once they are able to review the final text I know they will appreciate the positive impact it will have."

(Cont'd)

Elzinga welcomes completion of Free Trade document (cont'd)

The Minister said the Free Trade agreement will influence Alberta's overall food export industry. Although the United States is the major market for Alberta goods, food processors are anxious to expand sales not only in North America but around the world. And product development - having something to sell - is one of the first steps.

The Leduc centre, staffed by food scientists and equipped with sophisticated testing and pilot-scale production equipment, provides service to food processors to develop and improve food products.

The Minister says examples of achievements at the centre range from perfecting packaging techniques, to creating a new line of food products for processors, and developing meat products specifically for Japanese consumers.

He says food scientists at Leduc helped a Calgary food processor create a new salad dressing that this now being produced in Alberta and sold nationally.

As well they worked with an Edmonton firm to adapt the technology of modified atmosphere packaging to a line of ready-to-eat sandwiches and bakery goods which are now being marketed provincially, nationally and internationally.

Specialists are working on formulations to create microwavable beef products and in other projects develop new products such as nutrient-rich drink mixes, soups, and gourmet icecreams.

"These are just a few examples of the type of work done at the centre working with vegetables, meats, fruits cereals and other raw materials, that result in new or improved products being made for the grocery shelf," says the Minister. "And the benefits are obvious throughout the food production chain. It benefits the farmer by creating a demand for his product. It benefits the processor who now has a new product to market. And it benefits the consumer who has more variety and top quality products from which to choose."

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Contact: Dr. Dave Schroder 986-4793
Cliff Wulff 427-3166

December 14, 1987
For immediate release

Leduc centre helps launch variety of food products

If you've ever bought a ready-to-eat sub sandwich from the neighborhood convenience store, chances are its air-tight packaging was developed by Alberta Agriculture food scientists in Leduc.

Or the next time you pick up some Alberta-made specialty meats or buy a salad dressing made by a Calgary company, remember they might have originated at the world-class facility in this community just south of Edmonton.

More than 250 Alberta companies have drawn on Alberta Agriculture know-how over the last three years, to develop and modify consumer food products which are sold across Canada and around the world.

The Alberta Food Processing Development Centre at Leduc, one of only three facilities of its kind in Canada, has become an important link in the science and technology of converting agricultural raw materials into consumer food products sold in Alberta and worldwide.

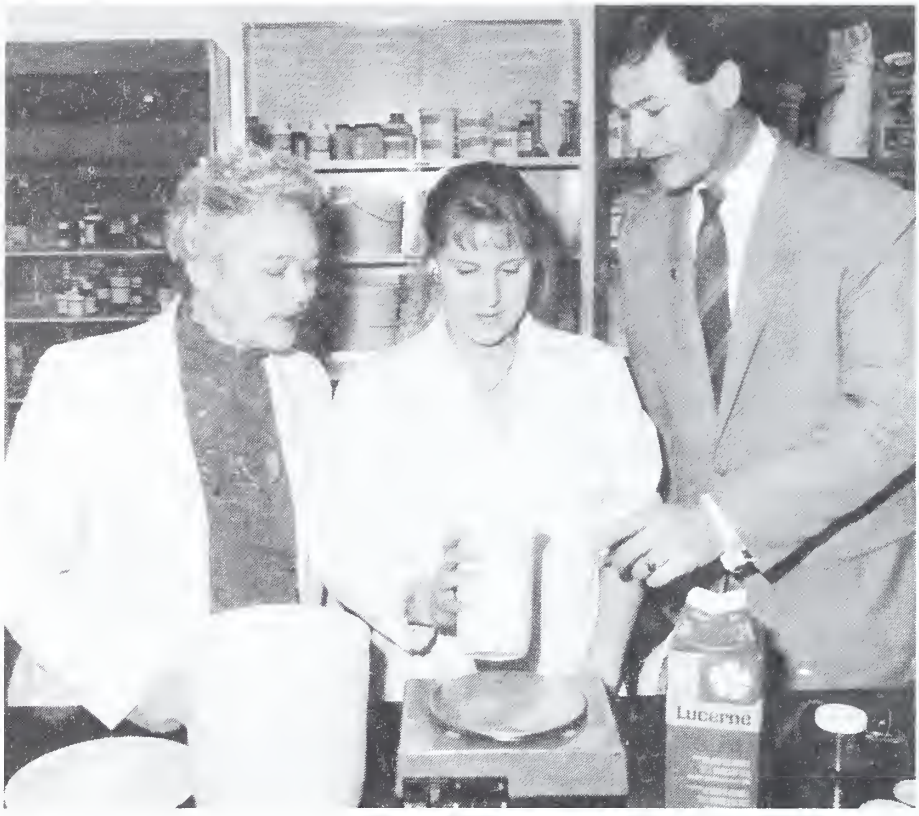
And it is expected there will be increased emphasis in the next few years to develop more Alberta-made products for an expanding domestic and international marketplace.

The $8.6 million facility, that works behind-the-scenes with large and small food processors, recently marked its third anniversary by hosting a tour of the centre for Alberta Agriculture Minister Peter Elzinga, Associate Minister Shirley Cripps, and senior department officials.

The Food Processing Development Centre was opened in December 1984 to work with Alberta industry to develop and improve a wide range of food products that have become part of everyday life for consumers.

Centre director Dr. Dave Schroder, says the expertise has been applied to products that range from packaging for sandwiches and bakery goods sold in Canada, to special meat products exported to Japan.

(Cont'd)



Associate Agriculture Minister Shirley Cripps, left, and Agriculture Minister Peter Elzinga, right, talk with University of Alberta research assistant Arlene Parrott about a new food product being tested at the Alberta Agriculture Food Processing Development Centre at Leduc. The hyper-metabolic product will be used as a nutritional supplement for hospital patients, such as trauma victims needing a high-calorie diet.

Associate Agriculture Minister Shirley Cripps, left, Leduc centre director Dr. Dave Schroder, and Agriculture Minister Peter Elzinga check on some of the activities in the centre's test kitchen. At right, Jaqueline Gelfand, a food products development laboratory assistant, works on a fudge recipe for an Alberta processor.

Leduc centre helps launch variety of food products (cont'd)

Food scientists have worked on everything from meat products to salad dressings, vegetables, bakery goods, cereals, jams, desserts and other specialty items.

The centre director says food scientists are sometimes called on to create a brand new technique, but more often their work involves adapting known food processing technology to Alberta products for Canadian and export markets.

"In the last three years we have worked with companies on numerous products," says Schroder. "Often a company might already have a product on the market but want to lengthen its shelf life, or solve some other problem and make it more appealing or convenient for consumers. They may bring us a foreign-made food product and ask our help in developing an Alberta version which can be produced here. Other companies may come to us with only a concept and contract our services to create something brand new."

With six food scientists, all with strong industry experience, support staff, and some of the most sophisticated equipment available, the centre can provide service in three areas, says Schroder.

It can provide technical information and advice to processors, it can use its product development laboratories to create or adapt foods for specific markets and needs, and it can simulate industrial production of a product in its pilot plant.

And he stresses that all work at the centre is done in strictest confidence with the processor.

The Food Processing Development Centre clients can range from one-man Alberta operations that just can't afford their own manpower and equipment to develop a specific product, to international corporations that may want to contract centre facilities for pilot projects on new foods or processes before making a major capital investment.

"There is probably no single major achievement in the last three years, just plenty of success stories for a variety of food processors who have had new products developed or problems solved," says Schroder.

(Cont'd)

"With the staff and facilities we have, different projects can run simultaneously and projects can take anywhere from three or four hours to months to complete, depending on the objective. As well our facilities are available under contract to food processors who may want to send their own specialists in to work with our lab and pilot plant staff."

The centre director says food scientists will often work with processors in their own plants on any processing problems or recommend changes in production techniques which could improve product quality.

"We also provide seminars on various topics here at the centre for food processors," he says. "As an example we recently held a seminar on processing specialty meats for a number of smaller meat processors. The facilities were made available for demonstrations on sausage and loaf making techniques."

Schroder predicts that with a focus on international market development there will be a greater emphasis placed on developing Alberta food products for international tastes.

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Contact: Dr. Dave Schroder
986-4793

December 14, 1987
For immediate release

Beef producers should hone their marketing skills

Livestock marketing isn't just a skill the big-time movers and shakers in the beef industry can use to sell cattle, says a specialist with Alberta Agriculture.

While most feedlot owners, dealers and large cow/calf operations use a variety of resources and techniques to get the top dollar for cattle, even the smallest beef producer can benefit from improved marketing skills, says Doug Walkey, regional marketing specialist in Red Deer.

Walkey says even though beef prices continue relatively strong, all farmers and ranchers would be wise to hone their marketing techniques now to be in a better position the day prices might take a slide.

"Traditionally many beef producers take their calves to the nearest auction mart each fall hoping prices will be fairly strong that day," says Walkey. "And that's about the extent of marketing. I'm saying there are some basic steps a cow/calf operator can take that might just make a big difference in the profit picture."

Walkey is chairman of the 1988 Alberta Beef Symposium which will focus on "Live Cattle Marketing - Options for the Future". It's a conference designed for all cattlemen but may be particularly useful for those with 200 head of cattle or less looking for new skills when selling their cattle.

The February 2 and 3 conference at the Coast Terrace Inn in Edmonton, will bring together a variety of speakers to share their experience and advice with Alberta producers.

"We have several producers and beef industry representatives on the program who understand things from a farmer's viewpoint and will be providing some very practical and useful information," says Walkey.

The symposium will look at the present beef marketing system - pointing out its strengths and weaknesses - as well as take a look at some of the future trends.

(Cont'd)

Beef producers should hone their marketing skills (cont'd)

Among symposium speakers are Rob Mitchell, a cow/calf producer from Pincher Creek; Ed Thiessen, a farmer and feedlot owner from Strathmore; Brenda Scheideman, a cow/calf producer from Stony Plain; Gary Kelsy who operates a farming, feedlot and cattle buying operation at Carstairs; and Pat McCarthy, a mixed grain farmer, cow/calf operator and custom feedlot owner from Camrose.

They will be joined by university researchers, industry representatives and marketing specialists at the two-day program.

David Wright, a cattleman and industry leader from New South Wales, Australia will be a feature speaker during the symposium describing the cattle marketing system "down under".

While registrations will be accepted well into January, conference organizers are offering a substantial registration fee discount for those signing up before January 1.

The cost before January 1 is $70 per registrant ($55 for spouse) while after January 1 the cost is $90 per registrant ($75 for spouse).

The symposium is co-sponsored by Alberta Agriculture and the Alberta Cattle Commission.

For registration forms or more information contact any Alberta Agriculture district office, the Alberta Cattle Commission in Calgary at 291-4800 or Doug Walkey in Red Deer at 340-7612.

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Contact: Doug Walkey
340-7612

Alberta 4-Her's among tops in judging

Three members of the 1987 Alberta 4-H Judging Team were recently among the top finalists at the Canadian Western Agribition in Regina.

The three placed in the top nine grand aggregate standings, after competing against 44 4-H delegates from across Canada and the United States with their knowledge of livestock, judging classes of beef and dairy cattle, lighthorse, sheep and swine.

Tamara Kapicki of Gibbons stood third overall in the judging competition, while her sister Nicola Kapicki was in fourth place, and James Schwindt of Spruce Grove was in ninth place.

Nicola Kapicki placed first in swine judging and fourth in the oral reasons competition. Maureen Kushak of the Sturgeon Valley Dairy Club placed third in dairy judging and was followed in fourth place by James Schwindt.

Tanya Van Tighem of Carstairs ranked first in lighthorse judging and Bill Jansseen of Red Deer followed in fifth. Van Tighem also placed first in sheep judging. Rob Palmer of Forestburg ranked third in swine judging.

Other members of the Alberta team were Sheena Kujala of Eckville, Mark Miyanaga of Taber and Pat Pavka of Cranford.

Miyanaga and Pavka participated in the grain and crop science judging along with eight others from across Canada and the United States.

Participants judged classes of cereals and oilseeds, specialty crops, weed and seed identification, sheaf making and oral reasons.

Pavka ranked first and Miyanaga captured second place in cereals and oilseeds judging, while Pavka ranked second in sheaf making judging.

The team was chaperoned by Henry Wiegman, Albert Agriculture provincial 4-H agriculture specialist and Albert Mappin, leader of the Byemoor Beef Club. The Alberta team was sponsored by Edmonton Northlands Farm Fair and Alberta Agriculture's 4-H branch.

The International 4-H Judging Seminar was sponsored by Canadian Western Agribition, John Deere Ltd., Canadian Charolais Association and Canadian National.

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Contact: Henry Wiegman
427-2541

December 14, 1987
For immediate release

Horse breeders/owners conference planned for Red Deer

Horse owners throughout the province looking for up-to-date information on issues affecting the horse industry should plan to take in a two-day conference in Red Deer in mid-January.

A wide variety of topics from feeding young horses to marketing, and surviving in a depressed economy will be addressed at the fourth annual Alberta Horse Breeders and Owners Conference, January 16 and 17 at the Capri Centre.

Les Burwash, supervisor of Alberta Agriculture's horse industry branch in Calgary says the conference is regarded as one of the most successful and prestigious of its kind in Canada.

Among North American experts participating in this conference are Dr. James Rooney, director Gluck Research Centre, Lexington Kentucky; Jim Day, team gold medal winner, 1968 Olympics and now Canada's leading Thoroughbred trainer; Juli S. Thorson, editorial director "The Lariat"; and Dr. Gary Potter of Texas A & M University.

Cost of the conference is $75 per person or $125 per couple. Anyone registering before the conference will be eligible for an earlybird draw prize of two nights accommodation at the Timberline Lodge in Banff, plus $100 spending money.

For more information contact the Alberta Agriculture horse industry branch offices in Calgary at 297-6650 or Edmonton at 427-8905.

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Contact: Les Burwash
297-6650

December 14, 1987
For immediate release

1987 farm calendars available from DA offices

A compact farm office organizer, which serves as a place to keep track of everything from financial records to market prices, is now available from Alberta Agriculture district offices.

The Save-All Management Planning Calendar, a "pouch calendar" that has proven popular with many farm families for the past six years is now available, without charge, at all DA offices.

"We find that people use it for a wide range of purposes," says Anita Lunden, with the department's farm business management branch in Olds.

"Along with using it to look up the month and day, results from a recent survey show the calendar is used as a temporary file for bills and receipts for recording appointments and upcoming events; for seeding and harvesting dates and for noting weather conditions and even birthdays."

Each month, the practical and durable calendar shows a list of dates and events to remember, displays the current month with room for notations on each date, notes days elapsed and number of days in the current year and provides a message from a calendar sponsor.

"Farm families and district extension staff praise this type of calendar," says Lunden. "People have said the date reminders are useful, they've appreciated the product and service information from the sponsors and they like the size and strength of the pouch."

Aithough produced by Alberta Agriculture, the cost of publishing the calendar is funded by several sponsors. Lunden says the department appreciates the co-operation and support provided by the agencies and companies in producing this edition.

Sponsors providing funds again this year include CN Rail, Cominco Fertilizers Ltd., Cyanimid Canada Inc., Olds College, Treasury Branches of Alberta and Alberta Agriculture's home economics branch.

(Cont'd)

1987 farm calendars available from DA offices (cont'd)

New sponsors this year include AGT Mobile Communications, The Blackfoot Inn, Nova Corporation of Alberta, TransAlta Utilities and Alberta Power Limited.

Limited quantities of the calendars are available to Alberta farm families on a first come, first served basis from Alberta Agriculture district offices. For more information on the calendar contact Anita Lunden in Olds at 556-4240.

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Contact: Anita Lunden
556-4240

For immediate release

Veterinarians assume temporary posts

Three Alberta Agriculture veterinarians in Edmonton and Airdrie have taken on new responsibilities following temporary management changes in the department's animal health division.

Because of staff changes caused by special assignments, the three veterinarians have been appointed to new management and field posts for a two-year term.

Dr. Ralph Shute, head of the livestock inspection service has assumed the post of acting head of the health management branch in Edmonton.

In conjunction with that appointment, Dr. Ray Fenton, a department field veterinarian in Airdrie takes over Shute's former post as head of the inspection service for a two-year term, while Dr. Jane Pritchard returns to the department staff to fill Fenton's position as a field veterinarian in Airdrie.

As acting branch head, Shute will be in charge of field programs and activities to improve the health and production of livestock in Alberta. He first joined the department in 1980.

Born and raised in Edmonton, he obtained his D.V.M. (Doctor of Veterinary Medicine) degree at the Ontario Veterinary College in 1964.

Following that he practised veterinary medicine in Leduc for six years before returning to the Western College of Veterinary Medicine to complete the requirements for a diploma in diagnostic pathology. In 1971 he returned to Leduc to take over the operation of the Leduc Veterinary Hospital.

Shute, his wife and youngest son live at Leduc. His oldest son and only daughter are studying at university.

In his new position as head of inspection services, Fenton will be responsible for supervising the veterinary inspection of livestock at Alberta livestock markets, provincial grazing reserves and community pastures.

(Cont'd)

Controlling the spread of livestock diseases, the humane handling of livestock and ensuring the adequacy of stockyard facilities are the primary responsibilities of this position. He will also assume responsibility for the control and eradication of contagious footrot in sheep.

Born and raised on a farm in the Grande Prairie district, Fenton spent two years in veterinary practice in Ontario after graduating from the Western College of Veterinary Medicine in 1970.

In 1972 he joined a mixed veterinary practice in Fort Saskatchewan, which he later owned and operated from 1974 to 1980. In 1980 he conducted a one-year investigation for Alberta Agriculture into reproductive problems affecting dairy cattle. Since 1981, Fenton has been with the department as a field veterinarian at Airdrie.

Because the appointment is made for a two-year term, the position has been temporarily relocated to the Airdrie regional lab.

Fenton and his wife and three sons live at Crossfield.

As a field veterinarian in Airdrie, Pritchard will centre her activities in southern Alberta, while co-ordinating them with other members of the health management branch in the province.

Her responsibilities will include assisting in the supervision of inspection at auction markets and field investigations of important or unusual disease outbreaks. Pritchard will also be conducting extension programs for producers in co-ordination with both practising veterinarians and district agriculturists.

The veterinarian graduated from the University of Toronto with a bachelor of arts degree in 1972 and obtained her doctor of veterinary medicine degree from the Ontario Veterinary College in 1977. She practised in British Columbia before joining Alberta Agriculture in 1980 as a veterinary pathologist at the regional lab in Fairview.

She was with the Fairview lab and ranched in the Fairview area with her husband and two children until moving with her family to Calgary in 1986.

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Contact:	Dr. Ralph Shute	Dr. Ray Fenton	Dr. Jane Pritchard
	436-9343	948-8579	948-8579

Editor's Note

Following is the fourth part of an eight-part series on farm management planning, prepared by Alberta Agriculture specialist Craig Edwards.

The series deals with some of the factors farmers and farm managers should consider in developing their own farm management plans.

Ideally the series should run sequentially from part 1 to 8, but if space or scheduling becomes a problem, each article can stand alone. If not used as a series, some articles may require minor editing.

For any further information on the series contact Craig Edwards in Olds at 556-4238 or the Agri-News Editor in Edmonton at 427-2121.

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Making production decisions
Fourth in a series

A review of some economic principles of production and a method to apply them to real decision making on the farm, is provided in a new factsheet from Alberta Agriculture.

The application of nitrogen fertilizer to barley is used as an example to illustrate the basic principles involved, says Craig Edwards, a specialist with the farm business management branch in Olds.

Dr. Leonard Bauer, a professor in the Department of Rural Economy, University of Alberta and author of the article, uses tables and graphs to show expected barley yield in relation to nitrogen fertilizer application, dollar value related to time delays in receiving revenue and consideration of risk and uncertainty.

"Farmers can make good use of this article," says Edwards, a farm management economist. "It explains a simple method to adjust expectations to different conditions of the real world using proven principles of production.

"A fertilizer decision is only one of many decisions farmers have to make each year, but most decisions can be made better and easier by using a process like this."

"Making Production Decisions" Agdex 818-35, May 1987, is available at Alberta Agriculture district offices or the Publications Office, Alberta Agriculture, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6.

Farmers wanting any help in understanding or applying the concepts described in the publication can call on their district agriculturists, regional economists or write to Craig Edwards, Farm Business Management Branch, Alberta Agriculture, Box 2000, Olds, Alberta, T0M 1P0 or phone 556-4248.

(Next week - Part Five in the series - Fertilizer Economics)

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Contact: Craig Edwards
556-4248

Farmers exempt from transportation permit fees

Farmers will feel few effects from Alberta Transportation's new policy of charging for permits and certificates needed to haul goods on Alberta highways.

The Alberta Motor Transport Services branch of the Alberta Motor Transport Board headquartered in Red Deer which handles the regulatory system, says generally farmers will be exempt from the fees which come into affect in the new year.

Officials say farmers have always needed permits to haul over-sized loads such as grain bins, hay and some machinery on the highway. Under the new plan producers will still need the permits, but they won't be subject to the permit fees.

Effective January 1, 1988, Motor Transport Services will be assessing fees and charges for various permits and certificates issued for and on behalf of the Alberta Motor Transport Board.

Permits and certificates affected include extra-provincial operating authority certificate applications and renewals for both trucks and buses; over-dimensional permits, both single trip and yearly, including extended-length permits; and those involving the high load corridor.

Previously these permits and certificates were issued free of charge. However, with present economic and budget constraints, a proportion of the costs must be recovered in order to continue to provide an effective service, says an Alberta Transportation release.

"Although over-dimensional permits for commodities such as grain bins and hay will now be assessed, farmers have been granted an exemption," say transport services officials. "Carriers operating on Class 2 farm plates will be exempt from fee payments for over-dimensional permits. This will also include out-of-province farm vehicles carrying on what are considered farming operations in Alberta."

A new method of calculation has been developed for determining overload permit fees, intended to ease the administrative burden of both the user and the issuer with little change to total costs.

(Cont'd)

Farmers exempt from transporation permit fees (cont'd)

Intra-provincial certificates and single-trip or temporary operating authority will not be affected at this time.

Regarding extra-provincial permit renewal, any certificates expiring before January 1, 1988 will be renewed without any cost, providing the renewal is received before January 1, 1988. Certificates expiring subsequent to January 1, 1988 will be assessed fees regardless of whether the renewal application is received or processed prior to January 1, 1988.

For more information on changes to the permit and certificate system contact any vehicle inspection station, motor transport services regional office or the service's main office in Red Deer at 340-5139.

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Contact: Aaron Clements
340-5139

Nabi Chaudhary
427-5395

(Note: following are some of the more common fees which will apply to commercial haulers in 1988)

Motor Transport Services
Schedule of Fees
Permits and Certificates

OPERATING AUTHORITIES

Extra-Provincial Truck & Bus

Operating authority application	(New)	$150
Operating authority	(Amend)	150
Operating authority	(Renewal)	50
Operating authority application	(Eased Entry)	50

Third Party Involvement

Objectors to application	$100
Intervenors	100

AGRI-NEWS

CANADIANA
JAN - 6 1988

Best Wishes for Christmas
and the New Year
from the staff of
Alberta Agriculture's
Information Services Division

December 21, 1987

For immediate release

This Week

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

For immediate release

B.C. move might affect Alberta dairy industry

British Columbia's plan to withdraw from national agricultural supply management programs could have an impact down the road on Alberta's dairy industry, says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

Al Dooley, a dairy and poultry market analyst with the department in Edmonton, says if B.C.'s withdrawal from programs does become a fact it could eventually impact on the level of Alberta milk and dairy products marketed in B.C.

But Dooley says with the program requiring minimum notice of one full dairy year before opting out, the earliest anything could happen is August 1989 and by that time the situation could change.

The analyst noted B.C.'s move in his market review of the first-quarter of the 1987-88 dairy year. The Dairy Situation and Outlook to November 1987 has just been published and is available from Alberta Agriculture. The dairy year runs from August to July.

B.C. announced in September it was withdrawing from national dairy and poultry supply management plans in protest over the allocation of the quota share it receives. Production levels of these commodities are established by national agencies with each province given a certain quota.

Looking specifically at milk, B.C.'s industrial milk quota under the national program allows it to produce about 6.1 million kilograms of butterfat a year, while Alberta by comparison can produce 11.1 million kilograms of butterfat a year.

The B.C. government is saying that unless its share of the quota under the Canadian milk management plan is increased, it will opt out of the program and set its own milk production guidelines.

Dooley says if B.C. does increase industrial milk production it could reduce the demand for Alberta dairy products now sold into the west coast province.

The analyst says it is hard to predict what impact this move could have on Alberta's industry, but noted that over the next 20 months B.C. and supply management officials might reach a compromise.

(Cont'd)

In his report, Dooley also noted that the Canada/U.S. Free Trade deal, struck in the first quarter of this dairy year, is unlikely to have a major impact on Alberta's dairy industry.

The specialist says although the agreement does reduce tariffs affecting dairy products sold across the border, the treaty does not change traditional import quotas.

Looking at prices, the market analysis branch specialist says with a one-cent a litre price increase already announced in the first quarter of the dairy year, Alberta fluid milk producers could see another price increase of about one cent a litre early in 1988.

Alberta's fluid milk price is currently $48.13 per hectolitre, which is one of the lowest fluid milk prices in the country. As an example, Ontario and Quebec prices are $52.51 and $51.56 per hectolitre respectively.

Dooley says the fluid milk price is determined through a formula which reflects changes in the cost of production as well as demand. If the formula-computed price deviates from the actual price by a certain amount the price paid to farmers changes.

"Increases in the cost of dairy feed and, to a lesser extent, higher farm input prices and the consumer price index contributed to higher production costs and a price increase in September," he says. Prices will remain steady through December with a further price rise possible early in 1988. But with barley prices at or near their expected highs for the crop year and little change anticipated for hay prices over the coming months, cost of production increases are likely to be small and further price increases in 1988 are not expected in the near term."

Looking at the world picture, the specialist says milk production is expected to be down about one per cent in 1987 - the first drop in production since 1981. On the home front, both Canadian and Alberta milk production in the first quarter is down marginally from last year.

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Contact: Al Dooley
427-5382

December 21, 1987
For immediate release

Brian Colgan to head new Alberta Agriculture division

A 15-year veteran with Alberta Agriculture has been named director of a newly created division which has overall responsibility for the department's soil and water conservation and development programs.

Brian Colgan, who has held several positions with the department ranging from farm finance to extension and resource planning, has been named director of the new Irrigation and Resource Management Division.

In making the announcement Doug Radke, assistant deputy minister of planning and development in Edmonton, said Colgan's appointment is effective January 1, 1988.

The new division is an amalgamation of two former units known as the Resource Planning Division and the Irrigation and Conservation Division. It will be responsible for all the department's soil conservation programs, irrigation programs, and on-farm water management programs.

Prior to this appointment Colgan had been director of the Resource Planning Division.

The director began his career with Alberta Agriculture as a loans officer for the Agricultural Development Corporation. He later served as a district agriculturist and senior district agriculturist in Leduc.

Colgan moved to Edmonton in 1981 when he was named head of the land use branch. In 1983 he was named director of the Resource Planning Division.

He is a member of the Alberta Planning Board, a member of the Irrigation Council, and a member of the department's strategic management planning committee.

The assistant deputy minister said Colgan's experience with the department makes him well qualified for the new post.

(Cont'd)

"Brian's achievements in co-ordinating the Agricultural Land Base Study and the development of a departmental soil and water conservation and development strategy has demonstrated his ability to create a co-ordinated, team approach to the development of new and innovative policy development," said Radke. "At the same time he also has extensive practical experience in working with farmers and farm organizations. This experience will stand him in good stead in his new position."

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Contact: Brian Colgan 422-4596
Doug Radke 427-1957

December 21, 1987
For immediate release

Expert to discuss feeding young horses

The type of feeding and care a foal receives in its first year, will have a major impact on determining its growth and development, says an equine expert from Texas.

Dr. Gary Potter, a professor of animal science at Texas A & M University, says the nutrition young horses receive in the first 12 months will set the pattern of how they grow.

"For horses to reach their maximum potential as athletes, the first year's growth is critical," says Potter. "Feeding these young athletes so they will reach their potential and remain sound is fundamental."

"Feeding Foals and Young Horses for Optimal Growth" will be theme of Potter's talk in January as he addresses the fourth annual Alberta Horse Breeders and Owners Conference in Red Deer.

He is among more than a dozen horse experts and specialists who will be addressing the two-day conference January 16 and 17 at the Capri Centre.

Raised on a livestock and crop farm in Arkansas, Potter has gained international recognition for his research in nutrition and exercise of horses, body condition related to pregnancy, lactation and reproductive efficiency, as well as developing a body condition scoring system.

In Red Deer he will be addressing one of the most successful conferences of its kind in Canada, and a must for owners who are serious about the business of horses.

His talk will be one of several topics including marketing, genetics, training tips, equine research, health concerns and horse handling facilities.

Conference registration is $75 per person or $125 per couple, with those submitting early registration eligible for an early-bird draw.

For more information on the conference contact Alberta Agriculture's horse industry branch in Calgary at 297-6650 or Edmonton at 427-8905.

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Contact: Les Burwash
297-6650

December 21, 1987
For immediate release

Register early for Banff Pork Seminar
Animal behavior featured topic at annual conference

Animal behavior will be one of the featured topics in late January as national and international experts address the 1988 Banff Pork Seminar.

Alberta pork producers along with others interested in the swine industry are urged to register early for the January 27 to 29 conference, which will cover a wide range of topics including health, housing, management and meat production issues.

Fred Schuld, head of Alberta Agriculture's Pork Industry Branch, says anyone registering before January 1 will receive a $15 discount on registration costs. Discounts are also offered when registering more than one person from a company, farm or other organization.

"This seminar brings together speakers who are internationally recognized in their field," says Schuld. "Subjects covered are of interest to commercial pork producers, as well as researchers, agri-business representatives, extension and education specialists, and anyone requiring leading-edge information on pork production technology."

This is the 19th year for the conference which was previously named the Alberta Pork Seminar.

A featured speaker at the 1988 conference is Dr. Paul Hemsworth from Weribee, New South Wales, Australia. He will discuss the impact a farmer or herdsman's behavior can have on the behavior and productivity of swine in production operations.

Hemsworth says 70 per cent of the variation in farrowing rates of swine may be explained by the stockman's behavior around the animal.

As well Dr. Seaton Baxter, of the United Kingdom, who spoke to the 1987 seminar will be back to speak about individual and group housing for pigs, citing his new research in this area.

(Cont'd)

Register early for Banff Pork Seminar (Cont'd)

Other speakers and topics to be covered include: Brian Kennedy, Alternatives to the High Cost of Housing; Dennis Darby, Recirculation of Air; Jerry Leonard, An Update on Electronic Feeding of Sows in Alberta; Ed Doornebal, Vet Advice That Saves You Money; Harold Fast, Herd Health Programs; Bill Stone, Alberta Update on Disease; Chuck Rhodes, Sanitation, Disinfection - Does it Pay? and a VIDO swine technical group discussing What is Current and New in Pork Production.

The list of speakers continues with: Tony Kempster, What the Producer can do to improve the Quality of Pig Meat, and Factors Affecting Consumer Demand on Pork; Steve Jones, Pig Meat Quality in Canada; Roy Barrett, Transporting and Handling Pigs can Affect the Quality of Pig Meat; Neil Jones, Manage Employees for the Long Term; and Virginia Lynn, Relate to Family, Friends and Employees.

The final day's sessions will include: Sam Harbison, Opportunities Through A.I.; Fred Schuld, Producer Problems in Boar Management; Paul Hemsworth, How Boar Management Influences Reproductive Performance, and Good Husbandry Makes Dollars and Sense; and Frank Aherne and Marv Salomons, Save Baby Pigs.

For more information on the seminar or to register contact the University of Alberta, faculty of extension in Edmonton at 432-3029.

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Contact: Fred Schuld
427-5320

December 21, 1987
For immediate release

Cows can get too much of a good thing

Farmers could be doing a real disservice to themselves and injury to their cattle by suddenly boosting feed rations when cows freshen, says a veterinarian with Alberta Agriculture in Edmonton.

The jolt to the animal's system in jumping from maintenance rations to high energy feed at calving time can result in milk production losses and even permanent physical damage to the cow, says Dr. Gerald Ollis.

The health management veterinarian says this grain overload can be a common problem in all classes of livestock and is often seen in dairy herds. He says farmers should "lead feed" their cattle by working them gradually from maintenance rations to better quality feed over several weeks.

Ollis says the problem often results when dry cows, that have been kept on maintenance rations, are suddenly put on high levels of grain as soon as they calve.

"It's important that producers increase the grain ration slowly," he says. "I suggest they begin feeding the cow some grain (three to five pounds/day) up to 10 days before calving and then gradually increase the amount after calving until the cow reaches maximum milk production."

Grain overload creates a shock to the cow's system, says Ollis. The cow's rumen is a fermentation vat and suddenly switching from one quality of feed to another doesn't give the rumen microorganisms time to adjust.

The veterinarian says farmers should also realize that feeding more and more grain to dairy cattle is no way to compensate for poor hay. He says the animals can only handle so much grain and overfeeding only leads to trouble down the road.

Common problems resulting from grain overload range from simple indigestion because the "fermentation process" in the rumen hasn't adjusted, to major fluctuations in milk production, sore feet and lameness, and liver abscesses.

(Cont'd)

Cows can get too much of a good thing (Cont'd)

The laminitis and liver abscesses result when the grain overload produces too much lactic acid that can damage the lining of the rumen. This results in an increased absorption of toxic factors which cause an abnormal blood flow in the foot. Bacteria also enters the blood stream through the damaged rumen lining and settle out in the liver resulting in abscesses.

Ollis says the symptoms of lameness can show up months after the original 'insult' or overfeeding has occurred. The horn material of the feet is not normal and is more susceptible to damage or excessive wear.

"It can take up to two or three months for the lameness to appear," he says. "A farmer might observe a cow walking as thought she was stepping on hot coals or just be lame in one foot. Cows housed on concrete floors show more signs of lameness because of the increased hoof wear on the hard surface. The lameness is caused by sole bruising or excessive wear.

"Also before the lameness appears the cow often has erratic milk production. The producer may not realize the change in milk production is caused by periods of indigestion, brought on by the grain overload."

Ollis says if producers have foot problems in more than five per cent of their cattle they should suspect nutritional upset and look at the feeding program.

The veterinarian says along with improving quality of feed to match milk production after calving, the farmer must also remember that roughage is important in the diet. He says even rations of grain and good quality silage can cause problems because of the lack of effective fibre.

"It's important to get some long-stem hay into them," he says. "The fibre stimulates cud chewing, which increases saliva production and saliva contains a high level of bicarbonate which acts as a buffering agent in the rumen and helps control the acidity."

The veterinarian notes that an average cow on a hay/grain diet will produce about 400 pounds or 40 gallons of saliva a day which contains about 2.5 pounds of bicarbonate.

(Cont'd)

Cows can get too much of a good thing (cont'd)

Ollis says a balanced dairy ration should have no more than 60 per cent concentrate and at least 40 per cent roughage on a dry matter basis.

The veterinarian recommends dairy farmers start lead feeding grain to cattle at least 10 days before they calve. He says gradually introduce grain until the cow is receiving up to five pounds of grain a day by calving.

After calving, grain should be increased by about two pounds a day for a week and then stepped up by one pound a day until the cow reaches a maximum intake of 30 to 35 pounds a day. Ollis says a good rule is to provide one pound of grain for every three pounds of milk produced at peak production. He says a cow should reach maximum milk production at about six to eight weeks after calving.

The veterinarian says the best way to provide a balanced diet for the herd is to have their feed analyzed. He suggests producers work with a livestock nutritionist or their veterinarian to achieve adequate feed formulation.

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Contact: Dr. Gerald Ollis
436-9343

Editor's Note

Following is the fifth part of an eight-part series on farm management planning, prepared by Alberta Agriculture specialist Craig Edwards.

The series deals with some of the factors farmers and farm managers should consider in developing their own farm management plans.

Ideally the series should run sequentially from part 1 to 8, but if space or scheduling becomes a problem, each article can stand alone. If not used as a series, some articles may require minor editing.

For any further information on the series contact Craig Edwards in Olds at 556-4238 or the Agri-News Editor in Edmonton at 427-2121.

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December 21, 1987
For immediate release

Fertilizer economics
Fifth in a series

Farmers planning to fertilize in the 1988 crop year can improve their decision making skills by studying an Alberta Agriculture factsheet, says a department specialist.

Factors considered are expected crop response to nitrogen fertilizer application, expected crop prices, fertilizer cost, availability of operating capital and an assessment of risk.

The information is contained in the factsheet, Fertilizer Economics, (Agdex 822-11).

The publication is available from Alberta Agriculture district offices; the Publications Office, Alberta Agriculture, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta, T6H 5T6; or from the farm business management branch, Box 2000, Olds, Alberta, T0M 1P0.

"The publication uses a common sense approach to help interested producers decide how much nitrogen fertilizer to apply," says Craig Edwards, a department specialist in Olds.

It demonstrates a method of considering many factors to determine the most likely amount of fertilizer to apply to maximize profit, within the limits and conditions considered," says the farm business management branch economist.

Marginal analysis and equal marginal return analysis are demonstrated with a common sense method based on comparing added returns with the added costs of each application.

The comparison enables producers to assess potential gains relative to potential losses and helps them to select a rate of application associated with their ability and attitude to taking chances on the outcome.

"Producers can use the procedure described in the article to improve the probability of increasing the profitability of their production," says the economist. "Understanding the concepts will assist in developing production plans that make economic sense."

(Cont'd)

Fertilizer economics (cont'd)

Farmers needing help in understanding the concepts or applications can call on their district agriculturists, regional economists or write to Craig Edwards, Farm Business Management Branch, Alberta Agriculture, Box 2000, Olds, Alberta, T0M 1P0, or phone 556-4248.

(Next Week - Part Six in the series - It's Not Too Early For Crop Planning)

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Contact: Craig Edwards
556-4238

AGRI-NEWS

December 28, 1987

For immediate release

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Alberta
AGRICULTURE
Print Media Branch

Phone: (403) 427-2121

December 28, 1987
For immediate release

Seiyu exchange paying dividends

A three-year-old staff exchange program with a major Japanese retailer is paying dividends on both sides of the Pacific, say Alberta Agriculture officials.

The Seiyu Store exchange established in 1985 between the Japanese department store chain and Alberta Agriculture, has generated nearly $2 million in export sales from Alberta this year. And there are good indications of increased exports in the future.

"This agreement has been beneficial not only to Alberta food processors and manufacturers, but also to the Japanese consumer," says Deputy Minister Ben McEwen. "There is a great potential there for further exports and through this exchange we can better understand their consumer preferences and marketing system. At the same time their representative gets a first hand look at the scope of Alberta products that can be adapted or developed for Japanese consumers."

The staff training exchange was created in late 1985 with Alberta Agriculture marketing officer Jeff Kucharski selected for the first two-year stint with the Seiyu stores in Tokyo.

Seiyu in turn selected one of its officials, Kenji Makise, to take on a two-year term working with the department and Alberta processors.

"It was an opportunity for both our representatives to learn the system from the ground up - get first-hand experience," says McEwen. "And I believe the figures for this year's exports to the chain are a good indication of the success of the project."

Kucharski has completed his part of the exchange and has returned to Alberta to work as a department trade director with primary responsibilities in Japan. He has been replaced in Tokyo by Mike Leslie, a former marketing officer.

Makise will complete his Alberta exchange in early 1988 and be replaced by Hiroyoshi Shiragami.

The 270 Seiyu stores are among the top food retailers in Japan and the department store chain is part of the largest retail group in the country.

(Cont'd)

Seiyu exchange paying dividends (cont'd)

"The Japanese import and marketing system is quite different from what we have in North America," says Dennis Glover, executive director of the market development branch. "It takes time to have a product approved for export into their consumer markets. Often there are quotas involved, strict packaging and health requirements to be met, and it can be a complex procedure. That's why you need people like Jeff Kucharski, and soon Mike Leslie, who thoroughly know the system and can help direct marketing efforts."

At the same time the Seiyu representative in Alberta is interested in locating products that will appeal to Japanese consumers and ultimately benefit his company.

Glover says Kenji Makise works closely with specialists at Alberta Agriculture's Food Processing Development Centre at Leduc and private industry representatives to adapt existing products and develop new products for the Japanese market.

"Kenji has been involved in packaging and product development of several foods including meats, meat byproducts, beef-jerky and honey from Alberta that are destined for the Japanese market," says Glover. "Because he represents a department store chain, he is interested not only in food, but in all areas of manufactured consumer products."

Glover says an example of developing Alberta food products for Japanese tastes includes a recent beef project. He says while Japanese consumers like lean Alberta beef, there are some traditional dishes that call for well-marbled beef.

"We're working now with Alberta industry to see if we can select cattle to produce some meat products to fill this niche in the Japanese market."

The executive director says the Seiyu representatives experience in Japan will benefit him on his return to the retail chain giving him first-hand knowledge of the range and flexibility of products available from Alberta processors.

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Contact: Ben McEwen 427-2145
Dennis Glover 427-4241

December 28, 1987
For immediate release

Beef markets are unpredictable

After one of the craziest cattle buying seasons on record, a long time livestock industry observer isn't sure what advice he has for beef producers.

Ed Thiessen, who has been feeding cattle near Strathmore for the last 18 years, says there was no obvious logic to the prices paid by some buyers at auctions this fall.

Thiessen says there was as much as a 15 to 20 cent a pound price spread for similar quality cattle going through some auction marts on the same day.

But the owner of Thiessen Farms says the situation may just underscore how unpredictable cattle markets can be.

Thiessen, who operates a feedlot just south of Strathmore, in southern Alberta, will be among the key speakers in Edmonton in early February to address the second Alberta Beef Symposium.

This is a two-day conference designed to give beef producers a better understanding of the cattle marketing system. Of interest to all producers, it will be especially useful to cattlemen with 200 head of animals or less, say symposium organizers.

The feedlot owner, whose operation handles about 30,000 head of cattle a year, says there is no marketing formula which is going to tell a producer what to do year, after year.

"This was one of the most volatile feeder markets that I've seen in 18 years," he says referring to 1987. "Grain prices are extremely low and people are buying cattle to move grain. Cattle are staying in Alberta and being fed here. We're even pulling a lot in from Saskatchewan and Manitoba and I think the provincial government's Crow Benefit Offset Program has a lot to do with that."

Thiessen says the livestock industry is really at the mercy of attitudes and perceptions which at any given time could make quite a difference in the value of any livestock.

(Cont'd)

Beef markets are unpredictable (cont'd)

"Farmers and ranchers should remember that we market beef and not cattle," he says. "Factors such as conformation and length of loin and that sort of thing may not be that important. The industry is influenced by what the buyer perceives to be a good animal and of course by what the consumer wants at the meat counter."

Thiessen says producers have "really met the bill" in responding to market demand for the more muscular British and exotic cross-bred calves that will develop more muscle than fat.

He says a good, even batch of calves, with good weights and color will probably still bring top dollar, but in today's market "everything gets sold."

"It's hard to predict because what one buyer doesn't like in a calf or a group of calves, perhaps another buyer will. Again it's the buyer's perception of quality that will affect the price."

Thiessen says farmers should keep tuned into marketing and consumer trends and try to adapt with the times. He says issues ahead for the industry could involve a move toward more year-round calving to provide a continuous flow of Alberta cattle to feedlots and processors.

As well he says new systems may be developed that will reduce the stress the auction process places on animals. Although it helps to precondition calves on the farm, the sale yard still takes it toll on animal health.

Thiessen will be among several farmers and industry representatives addressing the February 2 and 3 symposium. A discount is being offered to all those who register before January 1 for the conference.

For more information or registration forms contact any Alberta Agriculture district office, or the Alberta Cattle Commission in Calgary, at 291-4800.

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Contact: Doug Walkey
340-7612

EDITOR'S NOTE

Following is a two-part feature on land rental agreements prepared by Alberta Agriculture specialist Lorne Owen.

The first article "Finding the perfect land rental agreement" discusses why rental agreements are important.

The second article "Land rental agreements become more complicated" gives a little more detail about what's involved in designing one of the new rental agreements.

The articles are written to stand alone if needed.

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December 28, 1987
For immediate release

Finding the perfect land rental agreement

Considering the current climate of agricultural surpluses, poor grain markets and government programs what's the best type of land rental agreement for both the landlord and the tenant?

That's not an easy question to answer says an Alberta Agriculture specialist. Lorne Owen, regional farm economist with the department in Airdrie, says there are a variety of rental agreements that can be used.

Along with pencilling out the figures, he says factors such as trust and goodwill and common sense are also needed to make any agreement work.

"Low grain prices and an array of government payments are changing the way rental arrangements are being drawn up," says Owen. "Over the last two years, some individuals have felt short changed by traditional rental arrangements. Landlords are wondering if they wouldn't be better off farming the land themselves in spite of the additional risk and management problems.

"Renters are also in a tight situation. At current prices, losses are being pencilled out on rented land unless one wants to count on a bumper crop, a large government payment, or an unexpected increase in grain prices. But not renting land leaves a renter facing higher machinery costs and less grain to sell."

Owen says in response to these problems, agreements are being changed. Some modifications have landlords and tenants sharing the ups and downs of prices and government payments without tying each others returns to decision making or the influence of weather on yield.

In other arrangements both parties are equally sharing cropping decisions, as well as returns, including crop insurance and special grain payments.

(Cont'd)

Finding the perfect land rental agreement (cont'd)

"Unfortunately these arrangements are more complicated and this is their disadvantage," he says. "A more complicated agreement results in a greater possibility for misunderstandings to arise. These misunderstandings can be reduced with careful attention to detail and carefully worded clauses in your written agreement. This along with a good deal of trust and goodwill between both parties will help things run smoother."

The specialist says these modified arrangements don't provide the perfect answer nor the single right answer to all situations but they can be very useful when matched with the right circumstances and people.

Owen says agreements such as joint venture, combined cash rent and profit sharing, fixed bushel rent, variable cash rent, and additional clauses in crop share and cash rental contracts are some of the options to be considered.

"These examples are not intended as a complete list nor as a recommendation," he says. "They are provided as ideas to a problem farmers and landlords may be dealing with. They all have their pros and cons that need to be analyzed. Before finalizing any arrangement, one should have a qualified legal opinion."

For more information on rental agreements contact any Alberta agriculture district office or regional farm economist.

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Contact: Lorne Owen
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For immediate release

Land rental agreements become more complicated

Alberta farmers and tenants are learning crop land rental agreements are becoming more complicated than a handshake, says an Alberta Agriculture specialist.

Lorne Owen, a regional farm economist in Airdrie says with both parties facing greater risks and uncertainty rental agreements are being designed to provide better protection to both the land owner and the renter.

He says joint ventures, combined cash rent and profit sharing, fixed bushel rent, variable cash rent, and additional clauses in crop share and cash rental contracts are options to be considered.

The specialist says these rental arrangements do not represent the complete list available and are not to be considered as recommendations. Owen says landlords and tenants should fully analyze any agreement and seek legal advice before finalizing any contract.

JOINT VENTURE:

While not a rental agreement it is an alternative way for people to work together. Joint venture agreements share income and expenses as well as risk between both parties.

The expenses shared usually include seed, fertilizer, chemicals, crop insurance, equipment fuel and repairs. These expenses are often shared on an equal basis. All income including crop sales, crop insurance, grain stabilization and special grain payments are then shared. Again, usually on an equal basis. The return over direct cash expenses provides a return for land ownership, machinery ownership, labor and risk.

Any number of variations can be written into these agreements to suit unique circumstances. With these agreements it is essential that the written agreement be very clear on many points.

(Cont'd)

Land rental agreements become more complicated (Cont'd)

Information on maximum and minimum amounts for each expense, when expenses are paid, how crops will be sold, the type of records that will be kept should be added to the written agreement. Should you get involved with this type of arrangement, accurate records are essential.

COMBINED CASH RENT AND PROFIT SHARING:

These arrangements combine a small cash rent with a percentage of gross receipts (including government payments) over a given level. An example would be a $9 cash rent and 40 per cent of gross receipts over $100 per acre.

With this combination of rental payments, both renter and landlords are sharing price and production risks and they both have some advantages. The renter has a better chance of covering his operating costs, if revenues are low because the rent stays at a proportionately lower rate. The landlord has a base amount of income and the opportunity to share in any unexpected increases in revenue such as government payments or higher yields.

In these agreements the renter should know what his production costs are so that a return for labor and risk is realized before the revenue sharing begins. A variation of this agreement is to decide on different percentages of rent for different levels of gross receipts.

An example would be a rental payment of 15 per cent on the first $100 of income and 40 per cent of receipts over $100. With this type of arrangement there needs to be an excellent accounting of grain sales, a clear definition of receipts to be included (how fertilizer and fuel rebates are handled) and an understanding of how and when grain is to be sold.

FIXED BUSHEL RENT:

This type of a rental contract provides the landlord with a given amount of grain per acre on an assigned date. This allows both parties the maximum amount of independence as they are not tied together by each others production and marketing decision. A clear understanding of delivery date is important and also independent storage facilities are required.

VARIABLE CASH RENT:

These agreements tie the cash rent to the value of the commodity produced. An example may be twelve times the price of a specified grade of barley on a given day. This is another type of agreement that provides a great deal of independence.

Landlord and tenant share the ups and downs of grain prices but rental rates do not fluctuate with production levels. With this type of an agreement the price of the commodity can be based on a market average (i.e. feedlot price on a given date) or on actual sales.

If actual sales are to be used, good records are essential and there must be an agreement on how final payments are handled, receipts from special contract sales and how the commodity is to be marketed. To distribute special payments, an additional clause needs to be added to the agreement.

ADDITIONAL CLAUSES IN CROP SHARE AND CASH RENTAL CONTRACTS:

Crop share and cash rental agreements are still the simpliest way of renting land and will still be the most common. Many individuals are reluctant to change, yet want a different distribution of special payments.

This can be done by adding clauses to the written agreement specifying how special payments are to be divided. The share that each party receives depends on various considerations, including the amount of crop share, share of inputs and amount of cash rent.

"These alternatives certainly do not provide a "right" answer but they do provide a few choices that may suit certain individuals," says Owen. "These agreements are more complicated than simple cash rental and crop share arrangements and as such may be prone to misunderstanding and disagreement.

"Given this, serious consideration should be given to the details and a lawyer representing your interest should be consulted. As with any successful business, arrangement trust, goodwill and a written agreement are essential."

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December 28, 1987
For immediate release

Winners named in farm safety competition

A Hutterite colony school in southern Alberta's County of Warner has been named the overall winner in an Alberta Agriculture farm safety essay and poster competition.

The Grade 1 to 7 students at the OK Colony one-room school have been recognized by the department's farm safety program for their poster entry.

The school led the list of 23 individual Alberta students and four classes, from a total of 10 schools, honored by the program. The winning posters, stories, essays and other artwork created by the students will be used to help illustrate the 1987 edition of the "A Child's Guide to Farm Safety" booklet.

The manager of Alberta Agriculture's farm safety program, Solomon Kyeremanteng, in announcing the winners, says this is the 11th edition of the booklet and the third year Esso Petroleum Canada has joined Alberta Agriculture in sponsoring the project.

Each year Alberta students are invited to participate by designing posters, essays or games around a farm safety theme. The winners from these entries are named to an honor roll and recognized with certificates from the department.

The OK Colony school was presented with its award December 18, while certificates will be presented to the other winners in January.

The Child's Guide to Farm Safety, an activity booklet designed around the theme of farm safety, has been incorporated into studies in many Alberta classrooms. Using posters and essays created by students, it presents students with problems and quizzes on a variety of farm safety matters.

Each year the new edition of the guide is used by about 50,000 rural Alberta students.

The guide is available to Alberta schools on a first come, first served basis and can be obtained by making a written request to the farm safety program office at department headquarters in Edmonton.

(Cont'd)

Following is a list of the students and classes named to the 1987 honor roll:

VERMILION	
Marcey Willes	Grade 4A
Jennifer Cholowski	Grade 4A
Mandy Baryski	Grade 3C
Ben Armstrong	Grade 5
Francis Burns	Grade 3B
Karl Betz	Grade 4A
Chris Stubbs	Grade 3
FORESTBURG	
Jeremy Forster	Grade 4
Andra Forster	Grade 3
Shawn Fink	Grade 3
Tyson Miller	Grade 3
Jade Freadrich	Grade 4
Stephanie Scott	Grade 3
DONALDA COLONY SCHOOL	
Ruben Hofer	Grade 5
Rosa Hofer	Grade 5
MUNDARE	
Zahra Zargar	Grade 3
Lisa Ilkiw	Grade 3
ALLIANCE	
Tara Fuller	Grade 4
CREMONA	
Mark Shand	Grade 3B
KITSCOTY	
Christopher Leighton	Grade 4A
Gianna Lampitt	Grade 4A
SPRUCE VIEW SCHOOL	
Carla Crawford	Grade 3
Aaryn Lightbown	Grade 2

Certificates were also awarded to Mrs. V.M. Ortlieb's Grade 5 class at New Sarepta Elementary School for their poster; Barry Wowk's Grade 5 class at Kitscoty Elementary School for their poster; and Mrs. J. Watt's Grade 4A class at Vermilion School for their poster entry.

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For immediate release

Manager commodity development section appointed

Lou Normand, head of Alberta Agriculture's agri-food and processing development branch has announced the appointment of Garry Benoit as manager of the commodity development section.

Benoit has a strong commodity background related to livestock, meats and crops. During the past six years, he worked with the marketing sector of Alberta Agriculture as senior marketing officer for meats and livestock in the international marketing division, and served as manager of the livestock development section of the agri-food development branch.

During this time he has developed a close working relationship with most livestock associations, semen and embyro companies, and many livestock producers.

Prior to joining Alberta Agriculture, Benoit spent four years as a director of government affairs in Ottawa for the Canadian Cattlemen's Association and prior to that he spent four years as agricultural attache with the Canadian Embassy in Washington, D.C. He also had extensive experience with Agriculture Canada in a number of locations in western Canada and in Ottawa.

"With his solid experience, Garry is well equipped to take on the responsibilities of the commodity development section," says Normand. "This section's main role is to assist in the development of associations and companies to assure they are fully prepared to take advantage of market opportunities, either in Alberta, other provinces or the world."

It is expected that Benoit will be the department representative on the Marketing Council and the marketing sector representative on the Forage Seed Council.

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Contact: Lou Normand
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Editor's Note

Following is the sixth part of an eight-part series on farm management planning, prepared by Alberta Agriculture specialist Craig Edwards.

The series deals with some of the factors farmers and farm managers should consider in developing their own farm management plans.

Ideally the series should run sequentially from part 1 to 8, but if space or scheduling becomes a problem, each article can stand alone. If not used as a series, some articles may require minor editing.

For any further information on the series contact Craig Edwards in Olds at 556-4238 or the Agri-News Editor in Edmonton at 427-2121.

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December 28, 1987
For immediate release

It's not too early for crop planning
Sixth in a series

While the work may change seasonally, farm planning should continue year round with winter being a good time for farm decision makers to concentrate on preparing a written plan, says an Alberta Agriculture farm management specialist.

Sometimes it's difficult to know where to start, but Craig Edwards says many farmers can begin by considering their crop choices.

"Making a separate budget for each crop showing variations such as different levels of fertilizer application, seeding rate and weed chemicals provides a good start for estimating yields, prices and costs," he says.

Edwards, a farm management economist of the farm business management branch in Olds says using a crop choice worksheet, like one recently published by Alberta Agriculture, is helpful.

"Planning activities and developing written plans is time well spent," says Edwards. "Farmers should make several copies of the worksheet before using it, so they can use several sheets for every crop they consider growing.

"Use separate sheets to show a high level of inputs, a medium level and a low level. They can be used to compare expected returns (yield times price) over expected variable costs for each crop. Comparing different levels of intensity of production after calculating expected yields and prices for each level will help in the decision of how much to attempt to grow, how to grow the crop and what to grow."

The worksheets are designed for farmers to use their own estimates of expected revenues and input costs per crop. The sheets give no typical costs but provide a format as a reminder of all the costs that might be included in the estimates.

(Cont'd)

It's not too early for crop planning (cont'd)

"The factsheet also provides explanations for using the worksheets to advantage in crop planning," says the economist. "The worksheets, when completed for each crop, provide the basic cost calculations required to make decisions. When the decisions are made, the cost calculations can be summarized for further steps of the planning process leading to a complete farm plan for the following year including a projected cash flow."

The factsheet, "Planning With Crop Choice Worksheets", (Agdex 815-2), is available from any Alberta Agriculture district office or from The Publications Office, Alberta Agriculture, 7000 - 113 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T6H 5T6.

(Next Week - Part Seven - "Getting More Bang For Your Buck")

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December 28, 1987
For immediate release

Diversification means more than special crops

A wheat mentality and government meddling led to the worldwide agriculture crisis prairie farmers contend with today, but there is still reason for hope, says an agriculture industry official.

Diversification and stubborn determination will pull farmers through these difficult times, says Dick Dawson, executive vice-president of Cargill Ltd. in Winnipeg.

He says planting special crops, finding new uses for traditional crops, raising livestock and getting government out of agricultural markets is the best recipe for survival.

Dawson, speaking at a recent special crops conference in Lethbridge said there is a worldwide trend to deregulate agriculture and allow natural forces to influence agricultural markets.

"The trend is there throughout the world," he said. "At the GATT meetings, at the OACD meetings, in the centrally-planned economies, and at the strategy sessions of the Canadian government's own agricultural department - one consistently reads that the key to the future health of agriculture here and abroad lies in a return to a more market driven system. We all know what to do - the question is whether we will have the strength and the political courage to do it."

Dawson said the industry failed to read the signals over the past 20 years which forecast trouble for the grain industry. However now that the industry has hit bottom, he doubts similar mistakes will be made in the future.

One of the historic problems for the industry was what he described as the "wheat mentality". He says since farming began on the prairies, producers, industry and government put all their faith into wheat production and markets, with little interest in diversification.

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Diversification means more than special crops (cont'd)

"After a slow start following the Second World War the Western grain economy came out of the '50s to a more prosperous 60s for both the farmers and the grain industry itself, and apart from a short but deep depression in the late '60s, the '70s was an even bigger story of growth and prosperity in the grain business.

"All the graphs pointed upward - and everyone preached a happy sermon of prosperous growth ahead. Who would want to challenge the preacher when you are sitting on a comfortable pew? I was one of those who drew some of those upward graphs...I was wrong."

One of the major threats to the industry - all the time working silently behind the scenes - was development of new milling techniques, he said. While top quality Canadian wheat had been dominant for many years, new technology which allowed industry to produce good flour from poorer quality and less expensive wheat was being developed. Demand for Canadian wheat was being eroded.

Although canola entered the scene there was little thought or money given to crop diversification.

The biggest blow to the industry resulted from the 1980 U.S. grain embargo imposed by President Jimmy Carter. Dawson said that act triggered the rest of the world to turn attention toward grain self-sufficiency which eventually created a world surplus and reduced demand for North American and Canadian grain exports.

The U.S. Farm Bill, the subsidy war between the U.S. and Europe, the collapse of the U.S. dollar and the drop in world oil prices are other factors which have had a serious impact on the grain industry.

Political meddling has prevented positive measures such as Canada's Western Grain Transportation Act from providing the benefits it was intended to deliver.

"We are left with a farm industry that is not only in a financial crisis, but is now dependent on political largess for survival," said Dawson. Its proud members are reduced to the role of welfare recipients. That is not the fault of the Crow. It is the result of an absurd subsidy battle between Washington and Brussels."

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Diversification means more than special crops (cont'd)

Dawson, who is also chairman of the board of governors of the Winnipeg Commodity Exchange, says new forces are now at work including development of non-traditional types of wheat and new demand for special crops.

He cautioned that success of special or cash crops will depend on freedom from government regulation.

"The primary reason for the growth of rapeseed and of corn, buckwheat, mustard, sunflowers, peas and lentils has always been and remains the fact that they are what we term a cash crop - by that we mean a relatively unregulated, free movement, freely marketable cash flow crop available to produce marketing income without having to be involved with institutional restrictions of quotas and railcar allocations.

He said to survive, the special crops industry needs the benefits and security a regulated system provides, but also must have the flexibility to make independent decisions.

Dawson said diversification of Canadian agriculture is more than just in crops, but a total systems concept.

"It is especially true for our marketing systems and our alternative choices. More than just adding a new variety, it is the freedom to make mistakes and the freedom to invest in new processing technology, new products and in secondary industry - with the right to be wrong the right to be right.

"...We can and we must diversify our agricultural practices and revive our secondary industries on the prairies."

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